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THE COMPLETE WORKS
OF
THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

MISCELLANIES, POEMS, AND LETTERS

University Edition

NEW YORK
SULLY AND KLEINTEICH

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thrown on Martin Luther. Atterbury undertook to defend the great Saxon Reformer, and performed that task in a manner singularly characteristic. Whoever examines his reply to Walker will be struck by the contrast between the feebleness of those parts which are argumentative and defensive, and the vigor of those parts which are rhetorical and aggressive. The Papists were so much galled by the sarcasms and invectives of the young polemic that they raised a cry of treason, and accused him of having, by implication, called King James a Judas.

After the Revolution, Atterbury, though bred in the doctrines of nonresistance and passive obedience, readily swore fealty to the new government. In no long time he took holy orders. He occasionally preached in London with an eloquence which raised his reputation, and soon had the honor of being appointed one of the royal chaplains. But he ordinarily resided at Oxford, where he took an active part in academical business, directed the classical studies of the undergraduates of his college, and was the chief adviser and assistant of Dean Aldrich, a divine now chiefly remembered by his catches, but renowned among his contemporaries as a scholar, a Tory, and a High Churchman. It was the practice, not a very judicious practice, of Aldrich to employ the most promising youths of his college in editing Greek and Latin books. Among the studious and well-disposed lads who were, unfortunately for themselves, induced to become teachers of philology when they should have been content to be learners, was Charles Boyle, son of the Earl of Orrery, and nephew of Robert Boyle, the great experimental philosopher. The task assigned to Charles Boyle was to prepare a new edition of one of the most worthless books in existence. It was a fashion, among those Greeks and Romans who cultivated rhetoric as an art, to compose epistles and harangues in the names of eminent men. Some of these counterfeits are fabricated with such exquisite taste and skill that it is the highest achievement of criticism to distinguish them from originals. Others are so feebly and rudely executed that they can hardly impose on an intelligent schoolboy. The best specimen which has come down to us is perhaps the oration for Marcellus, such an imitation of Tully's eloquence as Tully would himself have read with wonder and delight. The worst specimen is perhaps a collection of letters purporting to have been written by that Phalaris who governed Agrigentum more than five hundred years before the Christian era. The evidence, both internal and external, against the genuineness of these letters is overwhelming. When, in the fifteenth century, they emerged, in company with much that was far more valuable, from their obscurity, they were pronounced spurious by Politian, the greatest scholar of Italy, and by Erasmus, the greatest scholar on our side of the Alps. In truth, it would be as easy to persuade an educated Englishman that one of Johnson's Ramblers was the work of William Wallace as to persuade a man like Erasmus that a pedantic exercise, composed in the trim and artificial Attic of the time of Julian, was a dispatch written by a crafty and ferocious Dorian, who roasted people alive many years before there existed a volume of prose in the Greek language. But, though Christ Church could boast of many good Latinists, of many good English writers, and of a greater number of clever and fashionable men of the world than belonged to any other academic body, there was not then in the college a single man capable of distinguishing between the infancy and the dotage of Greek literature. So superficial indeed was the learning of the rulers of this celebrated society that they were charmed by an essay which Sir William Temple published in praise of the ancient writers. It now seems strange that even the eminent public services, the deserved popularity, and the graceful style of Temple should have saved so silly a performance from universal contempt. Of the books which he most vehemently eulogized his eulogies proved that he knew nothing. In fact, he could not read a line of the language in which they were written. Among many other foolish things, he said that the letters of Phalaris were the oldest letters and also the best in the world. Whatever Temple wrote attracted notice. People who had never heard of the Epistles of Phalaris began to inquire about them. Aldrich, who knew very little Greek, took the word of Temple, who knew none, and desired Boyle to prepare a new edition of these admirable compositions which, having long slept in obscurity, had become on a sudden objects of general interest.

The edition was prepared with the help of Atterbury, who was Boyle's tutor, and of some other members of the college. It was an edition such as might be expected from people who would stoop to edit such a book. The notes were worthy of the text; the Latin version worthy of the Greek original. The volume would have been forgotten in a month, had not a misunderstanding about a manuscript arisen between the young editor and the greatest scholar that had appeared in Europe since the revival of letters, Richard Bentley. The manuscript was in Bentley's keeping. Boyle wished it to be collated. A mischief-making bookseller informed him that Bentley had refused to lend it, which was false, and also that Bentley had spoken contemptuously of the letters attributed to Phalaris, and of the critics who were taken in by such counterfeits, which was perfectly true. Boyle, much provoked, paid, in his preface, a bitterly ironical compliment to Bentley's courtesy. Bentley revenged himself by a short dissertation, in which he proved that the epistles were spurious, and the new edition of them worthless; but he treated Boyle personally with civility as a young gentleman of great hopes, whose love of learning was highly commendable, and who deserved to have had better instructors.

Few things in literary history are more extraordinary than the storm which this little dissertation raised. Bentley had treated Boyle with forbearance; but he had treated Christ Church with contempt; and the Christ Church men, wherever dispersed, were as much attached to their college as a Scotchman to his country, or a Jesuit to his order. Their influence was great. They were dominant at Oxford, powerful in the Inns of Court and in the College of Physicians, conspicuous in Parliament and in the literary and fashionable circles of London. Their unanimous cry was that the honor of the college must be vindicated, that the insolent Cambridge pedant must be put down. Poor Boyle was unequal to the task, and disinclined to it. It was therefore assigned to his tutor Atterbury.

The answer to Bentley, which bears the name of Boyle, but which was, in truth, no more the work of Boyle than the letters to which the controversy related were the work of Phalaris, is now read only by the curious, and will in all probability never be reprinted again. But it had its day of noisy popularity. It was to be found, not only in the studies of men of letters, but on the tables of the most brilliant drawing-rooms of Soho Square and Covent Garden. Even the beaus and coquettes of that age, the Wildairs and the Lady Lurewells, the Mirabells and the Millamants, congratulated each other on the way in which the gay young gentleman, whose erudition sat so easily upon him, and who wrote with so much pleasantry and good breeding about the Attic dialect and the anapæstic measure, Sicilian talents and Thericlean cups, had bantered the queer prig of a doctor. Nor was the applause of the multitude undeserved. The book is, indeed, Atterbury's masterpiece, and gives a higher notion of his powers than any of those works to which he put his name. That he was altogether in the wrong on the main question, and on all the collateral questions springing out of it, that his knowledge of the language, the literature, and the history of Greece was not equal to what many freshmen now bring up every year to Cambridge and Oxford, and that some of his blunders seem rather to deserve a flogging than a refutation, is true; and therefore it is that his performance is, in the highest degree, interesting and valuable to a judicious reader. It is good by reason of its exceeding badness. It is the most extraordinary instance that exists of the art of making much show with little substance. There is no difficulty, says the steward of Molière's miser, in giving a fine dinner with plenty of money: the really great cook is he who can set out a banquet with no money at all. That Bentley should have written excellently on ancient chronology and geography, on the development of the Greek language, and the origin of the Greek drama, is not strange. But that Atterbury should, during some years, have been thought to have treated these subjects much better than Bentley is strange indeed. It is true that the champion of Christ Church had all the help which the most celebrated members of that society could give him. Smalridge contributed some very good wit; Friend and others some very bad archæology and philology. But the greater part of the volume was entirely Atterbury's: what was not his own was revised and retouched by him; and the whole bears the mark of his mind, a mind inexhaustibly rich in all the resources of controversy, and familiar with all the artifices which make falsehood look like truth, and ignorance like knowledge. He had little gold; but he beat that little out to the very thinnest leaf, and spread it over so vast a surface that to those who judged by a glance, and who did not resort to balances and tests, the glittering heap of worthless matter which he produced seemed to be an inestimable treasure of massy bullion. Such arguments as he had he placed in the clearest light. Where he had no arguments, he resorted to personalities, sometimes serious, generally ludicrous, always clever and cutting. But, whether he was grave or merry, whether he reasoned or sneered, his style was always pure, polished, and easy.

Party spirit then ran high; yet, though Bentley ranked among Whigs, and Christ Church was a stronghold of Toryism, Whigs joined with Tories in applauding Atterbury's volume. Garth insulted Bentley, and extolled Boyle in lines which are now never quoted except to be laughed at. Swift, in his Battle of the Books, introduced with much pleasantry Boyle, clad in armor, the gift of all the gods, and directed by Apollo in the form of a human friend, for whose name a blank is left which may easily be filled up. The youth, so accoutred and so assisted, gains an easy victory over his uncourteous and boastful antagonist. Bentley, meanwhile, was supported by the consciousness of an immeasurable superiority, and encouraged by the voices of the few who were really competent to judge of the combat. "No man," he said justly and nobly, "was ever written down but by himself." He spent two years in preparing a reply, which will never cease to be read and prized while the literature of ancient Greece is studied in any part of the world. This reply proved, not only that the letters ascribed to Phalaris were spurious, but that Atterbury, with all his wit, his eloquence, his skill in controversial fence, was the most audacious pretender that ever wrote about what he did not understand. But to Atterbury this exposure was matter of indifference. He was now engaged in a dispute about matters far more important and exciting than the laws of Zaleucus and the laws of Charondas. The rage of religious factions was extreme. High Church and Low Church divided the nation. The great majority of the clergy were on the High Church side; the majority of King William's bishops were inclined to latitudinarianism. A dispute arose between the two parties touching the extent of the powers of the Lower House of Convocation. Atterbury thrust himself eagerly into the front rank of the High Churchmen. Those who take a comprehensive and impartial view of his whole career will not be disposed to give him credit for religious zeal. But it was his nature to be vehement and pugnacious in the cause of every fraternity of which he was a member. He had defended the genuineness of a spurious book simply because Christ Church had put forth an edition of that book; he now stood up for the clergy against the civil power, simply because he was a clergyman, and for the priests against the episcopal order, simply because he was as yet only a priest. He asserted the pretensions of the class to which he belonged in several treatises written with much wit, ingenuity, audacity, and acrimony. In this, as in his first controversy, he was opposed to antagonists whose knowledge of the subject in dispute was far superior to his; but in this, as in his first controversy, he imposed on the multitude by bold assertion, by sarcasm, by declamation, and, above all, by his peculiar knack of exhibiting a little erudition in such a manner as to make it look like a great deal. Having passed himself off on the world as a greater master of classical learning than Bentley, he now passed himself off as a greater master of ecclesiastical learning than Wake or Gibson. By the great body of the clergy he was regarded as the ablest and most intrepid tribune that had ever defended their rights against the oligarchy of prelates. The Lower House of Convocation voted him thanks for his services; the University of Oxford created him a doctor of divinity; and soon after the accession of Anne, while the Tories still had the chief weight in the government, he was promoted to the deanery of Carlisle.

Soon after he had obtained this preferment, the Whig party rose to ascendency in the state. From that party he could expect no favor. Six years elapsed before a change of fortune took place. At length, in the year 1710, the prosecution of Sacheverell produced a formidable explosion of High Church fanaticism. At such a moment Atterbury could not fail to be conspicuous. His inordinate zeal for the body to which he belonged, his turbulent and aspiring temper, his rare talents for agitation and for controversy, were again signally displayed. He bore a chief part in framing that artful and eloquent speech which the accused divine pronounced at the bar of the Lords, and which presents a singular contrast to the absurd and scurrilous sermon which had very unwisely been honored with impeachment. During the troubled and anxious months which followed the trial, Atterbury was among the most active of those pamphleteers who inflamed the nation against the Whig ministry and the Whig Parliament. When the ministry had been changed and the Parliament dissolved, rewards were showered upon him. The Lower House of Convocation elected him prolocutor. The Queen appointed him Dean of Christ Church on the death of his old friend and patron Aldrich. The college would have preferred a gentler ruler. Nevertheless, the new head was received with every mark of honor. A congratulatory oration in Latin was addressed to him in the magnificent vestibule of the hall; and he in reply professed the warmest attachment to the venerable house in which he had been educated, and paid many gracious compliments to those over whom he was to preside. But it was not in his nature to be a mild or an equitable governor. He had left the chapter of Carlisle distracted by quarrels. He found Christ Church at peace; but in three months his despotic and contentious temper did at Christ Church what it had done at Carlisle. He was succeeded in both his deaneries by the humane and accomplished Smalridge, who gently complained of the state in which both had been left. "Atterbury goes before, and sets everything on fire. I come after him with a bucket of water." It was said by Atterbury's enemies that he was made a bishop because he was so bad a dean. Under his administration Christ Church was in confusion, scandalous altercations took place, opprobrious words were exchanged; and there was reason to fear that the great Tory college would be ruined by the tyranny of the great Tory doctor. He was soon removed to the bishopric of

Rochester, which was then always united with the deanery of Westminster. Still higher dignities seemed to be before him. For, though there were many able men on the episcopal bench, there was none who equalled or approached him in parliamentary talents. Had his party continued in power, it is not improbable that he would have been raised to the archbishopric of Canterbury. The more splendid his prospects, the more reason he had to dread the accession of a family which was well known to be partial to the Whigs. There is every reason to believe that he was one of those politicians who hoped that they might be able, during the life of Anne, to prepare matters in such a way that at her decease there might be little difficulty in setting aside the Act of Settlement and placing the Pretender on the throne. Her sudden death confounded the projects of these conspirators. Atterbury, who wanted no kind of courage, implored his confederates to proclaim James the Third, and offered to accompany the heralds in lawn sleeves. But he found even the bravest soldiers of his party irresolute, and exclaimed, not, it is said, without interjections which ill became the mouth of a father of the church, that the best of all causes, and the most precious of all moments, had been pusillanimously thrown away. He acquiesced in what he could not prevent, took the oaths to the House of Hanover, and at the coronation officiated with the outward show of zeal, and did his best to ingratiate himself with the royal family. But his servility was requited with cold contempt. No creature is so revengeful as a proud man who has humbled himself in vain. Atterbury became the most factious and pertinacious of all the opponents of the government. In the House of Lords his oratory, lucid, pointed, lively, and set off with every grace of pronunciation and of gesture, extorted the attention and admiration even of a hostile majority. Some of the most remarkable protests which appear in the journals of the peers were drawn up by him; and, in some of the bitterest of those pamphlets which called on the English to stand up for their country against the aliens who had come from beyond the seas to oppress and plunder her, critics easily detected his style. When the rebellion of 1715 broke out, he refused to sign the paper in which the bishops of the province of Canterbury declared their attachment to the Protestant succession. He busied himself in electioneering, especially at Westminster, where, as dean, he possessed great influence; and was, indeed, strongly suspected of having once set on a riotous mob to prevent his Whig fellow citizens from polling.

After having been long in indirect communication with the exiled family, he, in 1717, began to correspond directly with the Pretender. The first letter of the correspondence is extant. In that letter Atterbury boasts of having, during many years past, neglected no opportunity of serving the Jacobite cause. "My daily prayer," he says, "is that you may have success. May I live to see that day, and live no longer than I do what is in my power to forward it." It is to be remembered that he who wrote thus was a man bound to set to the church of which he was overseer an example of strict probity; that he had repeatedly sworn allegiance to the House of Brunswick; that he had assisted in placing the crown on the head of George the First; and that he had abjured James the Third, "without equivocation or mental reservation, on the true faith of a Christian."

It is agreeable to turn from his public to his private life. His turbulent spirit, wearied with faction and treason, now and then required repose, and found it in domestic endearments, and in the society of the most illustrious of the living and of the dead. Of his wife little is known; but between him and his daughter there was an affection singularly close and tender. The gentleness of his manners when he was in the company of a few friends was such as seemed hardly credible to those who knew him only by his writings and speeches. The charm of his "softer hour" has been commemorated by one of those friends in imperishable verse. Though Atterbury's classical attainments were not great, his taste in English literature was excellent; and his admiration of genius was so strong that it overpowered even his political and religious antipathies. His fondness for Milton, the mortal enemy of the Stuarts and of the church, was such as to many Tories seemed a crime. On the sad night on which Addison was laid in the chapel of Henry the Seventh, the Westminster boys remarked that Atterbury read the funeral service with a peculiar tenderness and solemnity. The favorite companions, however, of the great Tory prelate were, as might have been expected, men whose politics had at least a tinge of Toryism. He lived on friendly terms with Swift, Arbuthnot, and Gay. With Prior he had a close intimacy, which some misunderstanding about public affairs at last dissolved. Pope found in Atterbury, not only a warm admirer, but a most faithful, fearless, and judicious adviser. The poet was a frequent guest at the episcopal palace among the elms of Bromley, and entertained not the slightest suspicion that his host, now declining in years, confined to an easy-chair by gout, and apparently devoted to literature, was deeply concerned in criminal and perilous designs against the government.

The spirit of the Jacobites had been cowed by the events of 1715. It revived in 1721. The failure of the South Sea project, the panic in the money market, the downfall of great commercial houses, the distress from which no part of the kingdom was exempt, had produced general discontent. It seemed not improbable that at such a moment an insurrection might be successful. An insurrection was planned. The streets of London were to be barricaded; the Tower and the Bank were to be surprised; King George, his family, and his chief captains and councillors, were to be arrested; and King James was to be proclaimed. The design became known to the Duke of Orleans, regent of France, who was on terms of friendship with the House of Hanover. He put the English government on its guard. Some of the chief malcontents were committed to prison ; and among them was Atterbury. No bishop of the Church of England had been taken into custody since that memorable day when the applauses and prayers of all London had followed the seven bishops to the gate of the Tower. The Opposition entertained some hope that it might be possible to excite among the people an enthusiasm resembling that of their fathers, who rushed into the waters of the Thames to implore the blessing of Sancroft. Pictures of the heroic confessor in his cell were exhibited at the shop windows. Verses in his praise were sung about the streets. The restraints by which he was prevented from communicating with his accomplices were represented as cruelties worthy of the dungeons of the Inquisition. Strong appeals were made to the priesthood. Would they tamely permit so gross an insult to be offered to their cloth ? Would they suffer the ablest, the most eloquent member of their profession, the man who had so often stood up for their rights against the civil power, to be treated like the vilest of mankind ? There was considerable excitement ; but it was allayed by a temperate and artful letter to the clergy, — the work, in all probability, of Bishop Gibson, who stood high in the favor of Walpole, and shortly after became minister for ecclesiastical affairs.

Atterbury remained in close confinement during some months. He had carried on his correspondence with the exiled family so cautiously that the circumstantial proofs of his guilt, though sufficient to produce entire moral conviction, were not sufficient to justify legal conviction. He could be reached only by a bill of pains and penalties. Such a bill the Whig party, then decidedly predominant in both Houses, was quite prepared to support. Many hot-headed members of that party were eager to follow the precedent which had been set in the case of Sir John

Fenwick, and to pass an act for cutting off the bishop's head. Cadogan, who commanded the army, a brave soldier, but a headstrong politician, is said to have exclaimed with great vehemence: "Fling him to the lions in the Tower!" But the wiser and more humane Walpole was always unwilling to shed blood; and his influence prevailed. When Parliament met, the evidence against the bishop was laid before committees of both Houses. Those committees reported that his guilt was proved. In the Commons a resolution, pronouncing him a traitor, was carried by nearly two to one. A bill was then introduced which provided that he should be deprived of his spiritual dignities, that he should be banished for life, and that no British subject should hold any intercourse with him except by the royal permission.

This bill passed the Commons with little difficulty. For the bishop, though invited to defend himself, chose to reserve his defence for the assembly of which he was a member. In the Lords the contest was sharp. The young Duke of Wharton, distinguished by his parts, his dissoluteness, and his versatility, spoke for Atterbury with great effect; and Atterbury's own voice was heard for the last time by that unfriendly audience which had so often listened to him with mingled aversion and delight. He produced few witnesses; nor did those witnesses say much that could be of service to him. Among them was Pope. He was called to prove that, while he was an inmate of the palace at Bromley, the bishop's time was completely occupied by literary and domestic matters, and that no leisure was left for plotting. But Pope, who was quite unaccustomed to speak in public, lost his head, and, as he afterwards owned, though he had only ten words to say, made two or three blunders.

The bill finally passed the Lords by eighty-three votes to forty-three. The Bishops, with a single exception, were in the majority. Their conduct drew on them a sharp taunt from Lord Bathurst, a warm friend of Atterbury and a zealous Tory. "The wild Indians," he said, "give no quarter, because they believe that they shall inherit the skill and prowess of every adversary whom they destroy. Perhaps the animosity of the right reverend prelates to their brother may be explained in the same way."

Atterbury took leave of those whom he loved with a dignity and tenderness worthy of a better man. Three fine lines of his favorite poet were often in his mouth: —

> "Some natural tears he dropped, but wiped them soon:
> The world was all before him, where to chuse
> His place of rest, and Providence his guide."

At parting he presented Pope with a Bible, and said, with a disingenuousness of which no man who had studied the Bible to much purpose would have been guilty: "If ever you learn that I have any dealings with the Pretender, I give you leave to say that my punishment is just." Pope at this time really believed the bishop to be an injured man. Arbuthnot seems to have been of the same opinion. Swift, a few months later, ridiculed with great bitterness, in the Voyage to Laputa, the evidence which had satisfied the two Houses of Parliament. Soon, however, the most partial friends of the banished prelate ceased to assert his innocence, and contented themselves with lamenting and excusing what they could not defend. After a short stay at Brussels, he had taken up his abode at Paris, and had become the leading man among the Jacobite refugees who were assembled there. He was invited to Rome by the Pretender, who then held his mock court under the immediate protection of the Pope. But Atterbury felt that a bishop of the Church of England would be strangely out of place at the Vatican, and declined the invitation. During some months, however, he might flatter himself that he stood high in the good graces of James. The correspondence between the master and the servant was constant. Atterbury's merits were warmly acknowledged; his advice was respectfully received; and he was, as Bolingbroke had been before him, the prime minister of a king without a kingdom. But the new favorite found, as Bolingbroke had found before him, that it was quite as hard to keep the shadow of power under a vagrant and mendicant prince as to keep the reality of power at Westminster. Though James had neither territories nor revenues, neither army nor navy, there was more faction and more intrigue among his courtiers than among those of his successful rival. Atterbury soon perceived that his counsels were disregarded, if not distrusted. His proud spirit was deeply wounded. He quitted Paris, fixed his residence at Montpellier, gave up politics, and devoted himself entirely to letters. In the sixth year of his exile he had so severe an illness that his daughter, herself in very delicate health, determined to run all risk that she might see him once more. Having obtained a license from the English government, she went by sea to Bordeaux, but landed there in such a state that she could travel only by boat or in a litter. Her father, in spite of his infirmities, set out from Montpellier to meet her; and she, with the impatience which is often the sign of approaching death, hastened towards him. Those who were about her in vain implored her to travel slowly. She said that every hour was precious, that she only wished to see her papa and to die. She met him at Toulouse, embraced him, received from his hand the sacred bread and wine, and thanked God that they had passed one day in each other's society before they parted forever. She died that night.

It was some time before even the strong mind of Atterbury recovered from this cruel blow. As soon as he was himself again he became eager for action and conflict; for grief, which disposes gentle natures to retirement, to inaction, and to meditation, only makes restless spirits more restless. The Pretender, dull and bigoted as he was, had found out that he had not acted wisely in parting with one who, though a heretic, was, in abilities and accomplishments, the foremost man of the Jacobite party. The bishop was courted back, and was without much difficulty induced to return to Paris and to become once more the phantom minister of a phantom monarchy. But his long and troubled life was drawing to a close. To the last, however, his intellect retained all its keenness and vigor. He learned, in the ninth year of his banishment, that he had been accused by Oldmixon, as dishonest and malignant a scribbler as any that has been saved from oblivion by the Dunciad, of having, in concert with other Christ Church men, garbled Clarendon's History of the Rebellion. The charge, as respected Atterbury, had not the slightest foundation: for he was not one of the editors of the History, and never saw it till it was printed. He published a short vindication of himself, which is a model in its kind, luminous, temperate, and dignified. A copy of this little work he sent to the Pretender, with a letter singularly eloquent and graceful. It was impossible, the old man said, that he should write anything on such a subject without being reminded of the resemblance between his own fate and that of Clarendon. They were the only two English subjects that had ever been banished from their country and debarred from all communication with their friends by act of Parliament. But here the resemblance ended. One of the exiles had been so happy as to bear a chief part in the restoration of the Royal house. All that the other could now do was to die asserting the rights of that house to the last. A few weeks after this letter was written Atterbury died. He had just completed his seventieth year.

His body was brought to England, and laid, with great privacy, under the nave of Westminster Abbey. Only three mourners followed the coffin. No inscription marks the grave. That the epitaph with which Pope honored the memory of his friend does not appear on the walls of the great national cemetery is no subject of regret: for nothing worse was ever written by Colley Cibber.

Those who wish for more complete information about

Atterbury may easily collect it from his sermons and his controversial writings, from the report of the parliamentary proceedings against him, which will be found in the State Trials, from the five volumes of his correspondence, edited by Mr. Nichols, and from the first volume of the Stuart Papers, edited by Mr. Glover. A very indulgent but a very interesting account of the bishop's political career will be found in Lord Mahon's valuable History of England.

JOHN BUNYAN

The Encyclopædia Britannica, May, 1854

John Bunyan, the most popular religious writer in the English language, was born at Elstow, about a mile from Bedford, in the year 1628. He may be said to have been born a tinker. The tinkers then formed an hereditary caste, which was held in no high estimation. They were generally vagrants and pilferers, and were often confounded with the gypsies, whom in truth they nearly resembled. Bunyan's father was more respectable than most of the tribe. He had a fixed residence, and was able to send his son to a village school where reading and writing were taught.

The years of John's boyhood were those during which the Puritan spirit was in the highest vigor all over England; and nowhere had that spirit more influence than in Bedfordshire. It is not wonderful, therefore, that a lad to whom nature had given a powerful imagination, and sensibility which amounted to a disease, should have been early haunted by religious terrors. Before he was ten, his sports were interrupted by fits of remorse and despair, and his sleep was disturbed by dreams of fiends trying to fly away with him. As he grew older, his mental conflicts became still more violent. The strong language in which he described them has strangely misled all his biographers except Mr. Southey. It has long been an ordinary practice with pious writers to cite Bunyan as an instance of the supernatural power of divine grace to rescue the human soul from the lowest depths of wickedness. He is called in one book the most notorious of profligates; in another, the brand plucked from the burning. He is designated in Mr. Ivimey's History of the Baptists as the depraved Bunyan, the wicked tinker of Elstow. Mr. Ryland, a man once of great note among the Dissenters, breaks out into the following rhapsody: "No man of common sense and common integrity can deny that Bunyan was a practical atheist, a worthless, contemptible infidel, a vile rebel to God and goodness, a common profligate, a soul-despising, a soul-murdering, a soul-damning, thoughtless wretch as could exist on the face of the earth. Now be astonished, O heavens, to eternity! and wonder, O earth and hell! while time endures. Behold this very man become a miracle of mercy, a mirror of wisdom, goodness, holiness, truth, and love." But whoever takes the trouble to examine the evidence will find that the good men who wrote this had been deceived by a phraseology which, as they had been hearing it and using it all their lives, they ought to have understood better. There cannot be a greater mistake than to infer, from the strong expressions in which a devout man bemoans his exceeding sinfulness, that he has led a worse life than his neighbors. Many excellent persons, whose moral character from boyhood to old age has been free from any stain discernible to their fellow creatures, have, in their autobiographies and diaries, applied to themselves, and doubtless with sincerity, epithets as severe as could be applied to Titus Oates or Mrs. Brownrigg. It is quite certain that Bunyan was, at eighteen, what, in any but the most austerely Puritanical circles, would have been considered as a young man of singular gravity and innocence. Indeed, it may be remarked that he, like many other penitents who, in general terms, acknowledge themselves to have been the worst of mankind, fired up, and stood vigorously on his defence, whenever any particular charge was brought against him by others. He declares, it is true, that he had let loose the reins on the neck of his lusts, that he had delighted in all transgressions against the divine law, and that he had been the ringleader of the youth of Elstow in all manner of vice. But when those who wished him ill accused him of licentious amours, he called on God and the angels to attest his purity. No woman, he said, in heaven, earth, or hell, could charge him with having ever made any improper advances to her. Not only had he been strictly faithful to his wife; but he had, even before his marriage, been perfectly spotless. It does not appear from his own confessions, or from the railings of his enemies, that he ever was drunk in his life. One bad habit he contracted, that of using profane language; but he tells us that a single reproof cured him so effectually that he never offended again. The worst that can be laid to the charge of this poor youth, whom it has been the fashion to represent as the most desperate of reprobates, as a village Rochester, is that he had a great liking for some diversions, quite harmless in themselves, but condemned by the rigid precisians among whom he lived, and for whose opinion he had a great respect. The four chief sins of which he was guilty were dancing, ringing the bells of the parish church, playing at tipcat, and reading the History of Sir Bevis of Southampton. A rector of the school of Laud would have held such a young man up to the whole parish as a model. But Bunyan's notions of good and evil had been learned in a very different school; and he was made miserable by the conflict between his tastes and his scruples.

When he was about seventeen, the ordinary course of his life was interrupted by an event which gave a lasting color to his thoughts. He enlisted in the parliamentary army, and served during the decisive campaign of 1645. All that we know of his military career is that, at the siege of Leicester, one of his comrades, who had taken his post, was killed by a shot from the town. Bunyan ever after considered himself as having been saved from death by the special interference of Providence. It may be observed that his imagination was strongly impressed by the glimpse which he had caught of the pomp of war. To the last he loved to draw his illustrations of sacred things from camps and fortresses, from guns, drums, trumpets, flags of truce, and regiments arrayed, each under its own banner. His Greatheart, his Captain Boanerges, and his Captain Credence, are evidently portraits, of which the originals were among those martial saints who fought and expounded in Fairfax's army.

In a few months Bunyan returned home and married. His wife had some pious relations, and brought him as her only portion some pious books. And now his mind, excitable by nature, very imperfectly disciplined by education, and exposed, without any protection, to the infectious virulence of the enthusiasm which was then epidemic in England, began to be fearfully disordered. In outward things he soon became a strict Pharisee. He was constant in attendance at prayers and sermons. His favorite amusements were one after another relinquished, though not without many painful struggles. In the middle of a game at tipcat he paused, and stood staring wildly upwards with his stick in his hand. He had heard a voice asking him whether he would leave his sins and go to heaven, or keep his sins and go to hell; and he had seen an awful countenance frowning on him from the sky. The odious vice of bell-ringing he renounced; but he still for a time ventured to go to the church tower and look on while others pulled the ropes. But soon the thought struck him that, if he persisted in such wickedness, the steeple would fall on his head; and he fled in terror from the accursed place. To give up dancing on the village green was still harder; and some months elapsed before he had the fortitude to part with this darling sin. When this last sacrifice had been made, he was, even when tried by the maxims of that austere time, faultless. All Elstow talked of him as an eminently pious youth. But his own mind was more unquiet than ever. Having nothing more to do in the way of visible reformation, yet finding in religion no pleasures to supply the place of the juvenile amusements which he had relinquished, he began to apprehend that he lay under some special malediction; and he was tormented by a succession of fantasies which seemed likely to drive him to suicide or to Bedlam.

At one time he took it into his head that all persons of Israelite blood would be saved, and tried to make out that he partook of that blood; but his hopes were speedily destroyed by his father, who seems to have had no ambition to be regarded as a Jew.

At another time Bunyan was disturbed by a strange dilemma: "If I have not faith, I am lost; if I have faith, I can work miracles." He was tempted to cry to the puddles between Elstow and Bedford, "Be ye dry!" and to stake his eternal hopes on the event.

Then he took up a notion that the day of grace for Bedford and the neighboring villages was past; that all who were to be saved in that part of England were already converted; and that he had begun to pray and strive some months too late.

Then he was harassed by doubts whether the Turks were not in the right, and the Christians in the wrong. Then he was troubled by a maniacal impulse which prompted him to pray to the trees, to a broomstick, to the parish bull. As yet, however, he was only entering the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Soon the darkness grew thicker. Hideous forms floated before him. Sounds of cursing and wailing were in his ears. His way ran through stench and fire, close to the mouth of the bottomless pit. He began to be haunted by a strange curiosity about the unpardonable sin, and by a morbid longing to commit it. But the most frightful of all the forms which his disease took was a propensity to utter blasphemy, and especially to renounce his share in the benefits of the redemption. Night and day, in bed, at table, at work, evil spirits, as he imagined, were repeating close to his ear the words, "Sell him, sell him." He struck at the hobgoblins; he pushed them from him; but still they were ever at his side. He cried out in answer to them, hour after hour: "Never, never! Not for thousands of worlds, not for thousands!" At length, worn out by this long agony, he suffered the fatal words to escape him, "Let him go, if he will." Then his misery became more fearful than ever. He had done what could not be forgiven. He had forfeited his part of the great sacrifice. Like Esau, he had sold his birthright; and there was no longer any place for repentance. "None," he afterwards wrote, "knows the terrors of those days but myself." He has described his sufferings with singular energy, simplicity, and pathos. He envied the brutes; he envied the very stones in the street, and the tiles on the houses. The sun seemed to withhold its light and warmth from him. His body, though cast in a sturdy mould, and though still in the highest vigor of youth, trembled whole days together with the fear of death and judgment. He fancied that this trembling was the sign set on the worst reprobates, the sign which God had put on Cain. The unhappy man's emotion destroyed his power of digestion. He had such pains that he expected to burst asunder like Judas, whom he regarded as his prototype.

Neither the books which Bunyan read, nor the advisers whom he consulted, were likely to do much good in a case like his. His small library had received a most unseasonable addition, the account of the lamentable end of Francis Spira. One ancient man of high repute for piety, whom the sufferer consulted, gave an opinion which might well have produced fatal consequences. "I am afraid," said Bunyan, "that I have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost." "Indeed," said the old fanatic, "I am afraid that you have."

At length the clouds broke; the light became clearer and clearer; and the enthusiast, who had imagined that he was branded with the mark of the first murderer, and destined to the end of the arch traitor, enjoyed peace and a cheerful confidence in the mercy of God. Years elapsed, however, before his nerves, which had been so perilously overstrained, recovered their tone. When he had joined a Baptist society at Bedford, and was for the first time admitted to partake of the Eucharist, it was with difficulty that he could refrain from imprecating destruction on his brethren while the cup was passing from hand to hand. After he had been some time a member of the congregation, he began to preach; and his sermons produced a powerful effect. He was indeed illiterate; but he spoke to illiterate men. The severe training through which he had passed had given him such an experimental knowledge of all the modes of religious melancholy as he could never have gathered from books; and his vigorous genius, animated by a fervent spirit of devotion, enabled him, not only to exercise a great influence over the vulgar, but even to extort the half contemptuous admiration of scholars. Yet it was long before he ceased to be tormented by an impulse which urged him to utter words of horrible impiety in the pulpit.

Counter-irritants are of as great use in moral as in physical diseases. It should seem that Bunyan was finally relieved from the internal sufferings which had embittered his life by sharp persecution from without. He had been five years a preacher, when the Restoration put it in the power of the Cavalier gentlemen and clergymen all over the country to oppress the Dissenters; and, of all the Dissenters whose history is known to us, he was perhaps the most hardly treated. In November, 1660, he was flung into Bedford jail; and there he remained, with some intervals of partial and precarious liberty, during twelve years. His persecutors tried to extort from him a promise that he would abstain from preaching; but he was convinced that he was divinely set apart and commissioned to be a teacher of righteousness; and he was fully determined to obey God rather than man. He was brought before several tribunals, laughed at, caressed, reviled, menaced, but in vain. He was facetiously told that he was quite right in thinking that he ought not to hide his gift; but that his real gift was skill in repairing old kettles. He was compared to Alexander the coppersmith. He was told that, if he would give up preaching, he should be instantly liberated. He was warned that, if he persisted in disobeying the law, he would be liable to banishment, and that, if he were found in England after a certain time, his neck would be stretched. His answer was, "If you let me out to-day, I will preach again to-morrow." Year after year he lay patiently in a dungeon, compared with which the worst prison now to be found in the island is a palace. His fortitude is the more extraordinary because his domestic feelings were unusually strong. Indeed, he was considered by his stern brethren as somewhat too fond and indulgent a parent. He had several small children, and among them a daughter who was blind, and whom he loved with peculiar tenderness. He could not, he said, bear even to let the wind blow on her; and now she must suffer cold and hunger; she must beg; she must be beaten; "yet," he added, "I must, I must do it." While he lay in prison he could do nothing in the way of his old trade for the support of his family. He determined, therefore, to take up a new trade. He learned to make long tagged thread laces; and many thousands of these articles were furnished by him to the hawkers. While his hands were thus busied, he had other employment for his mind and his lips. He gave religious instruction to his fellow captives, and formed from among them a little flock, of which he was himself the pastor. He studied indefatigably the few books which he possessed. His two chief companions were the Bible and Fox's Book of Martyrs. His knowledge of the Bible was such that he might have been called a living concordance; and on the margin of his copy of the Book of Martyrs are still legible the ill-spelt lines of doggerel in which he expressed his reverence for the brave sufferers, and his implacable enmity to the mystical Babylon.

At length he began to write; and, though it was some time before he discovered where his strength lay, his writings were not unsuccessful. They were coarse, indeed; but they showed a keen mother wit, a great command of the homely mother tongue, an intimate knowledge of the English Bible, and a vast and dearly bought spiritual experience. They therefore, when the corrector of the press had improved the syntax and the spelling, were well received by the humbler class of Dissenters.

Much of Bunyan's time was spent in controversy. He wrote sharply against the Quakers, whom he seems always to have held in utter abhorrence. It is, however, a remarkable fact that he adopted one of their peculiar fashions; his practice was to write, not November or December, but Eleventh Month and Twelfth Month.

He wrote against the liturgy of the Church of England. No two things, according to him, had less affinity than the form of prayer and the spirit of prayer. Those, he said with much point, who have most of the spirit of prayer are all to be found in jail; and those who have most zeal for the form of prayer are all to be found at the alehouse. The doctrinal articles, on the other hand, he warmly praised, and defended against some Arminian clergymen who had signed them. The most acrimonious of all his works is his answer to Edward Fowler, afterwards Bishop of Gloucester, an excellent man, but not free from the taint of Pelagianism.

Bunyan had also a dispute with some of the chiefs of the sect to which he belonged. He doubtless held with perfect sincerity the distinguishing tenet of that sect; but he did not consider that tenet as one of high importance, and willingly joined in communion with quiet Presbyterians and Independents. The sterner Baptists, therefore, loudly pronounced him a false brother. A controversy arose which long survived the original combatants. In our own time the cause which Bunyan had defended with rude logic and rhetoric against Kiffin and Danvers was pleaded by Robert Hall with an ingenuity and eloquence such as no polemical writer has ever surpassed.

During the years which immediately followed the Restoration, Bunyan's confinement seems to have been strict. But as the passions of 1660 cooled, as the hatred with which the Puritans had been regarded while their reign was recent gave place to pity, he was less and less harshly treated. The distress of his family, and his own patience, courage, and piety softened the hearts of his persecutors. Like his own Christian in the cage, he found protectors even among the crowd of Vanity Fair. The bishop of the diocese, Dr. Barlow, is said to have interceded for him. At length the prisoner was suffered to pass most of his time beyond the walls of the jail, on condition, as it should seem, that he remained within the town of Bedford.

He owed his complete liberation to one of the worst acts of one of the worst governments that England has ever seen. In 1671 the Cabal was in power. Charles the Second had concluded the treaty by which he bound himself to set up the Roman Catholic religion in England. The first step which he took towards that end was to annul, by an unconstitutional exercise of his prerogative, all the penal statutes against the Roman Catholics ; and, in order to disguise his real design, he annulled at the same time the penal statutes against Protestant Nonconformists. Bunyan was consequently set at large. In the first warmth of his gratitude he published a tract in which he compared Charles to that humane and generous Persian king who, though not himself blessed with the light of the true religion, favored the chosen people, and permitted them, after years of captivity, to rebuild their beloved temple. To candid men, who consider how much

Bunyan had suffered, and how little he could guess the secret designs of the court, the unsuspicious thankfulness with which he accepted the precious boon of freedom will not appear to require any apology.

Before he left his prison he had begun the book which has made his name immortal. The history of that book is remarkable. The author was, as he tells us, writing a treatise, in which he had occasion to speak of the stages of the Christian progress. He compared that progress, as many others had compared it, to a pilgrimage. Soon his quick wit discovered innumerable points of similarity which had escaped his predecessors. Images came crowding on his mind faster than he could put them into words, quagmires and pits, steep hills, dark and horrible glens, soft vales, sunny pastures, a gloomy castle of which the courtyard was strewn with the skulls and bones of murdered prisoners, a town all bustle and splendor, like London on the Lord Mayor's Day, and the narrow path, straight as a rule could make it, running on uphill and downhill, through city and through wilderness, to the Black River and the Shining Gate. He had found out, as most people would have said, by accident, as he would doubtless have said, by the guidance of Providence, where his powers lay. He had no suspicion, indeed, that he was producing a masterpiece. He could not guess what place his allegory would occupy in English literature; for of English literature he knew nothing. Those who suppose him to have studied the Fairy Queen might easily be confuted, if this were the proper place for a detailed examination of the passages in which the two allegories have been thought to resemble each other. The only work of fiction, in all probability, with which he could compare his Pilgrim, was his old favorite, the legend of Sir Bevis of Southampton. He would have thought it a sin to borrow any time from the serious business of his life, from his expositions, his controversies, and his lace tags, for the purpose of amusing himself with what he considered merely as a trifle. It was only, he assures us, at spare moments that he returned to the House Beautiful, the Delectable Mountains, and the Enchanted Ground. He had no assistance. Nobody but himself saw a line till the whole was complete. He then consulted his pious friends. Some were pleased. Others were much scandalized. It was a vain story, a mere romance, about giants, and lions, and goblins, and warriors, sometimes fighting with monsters and sometimes regaled by fair ladies in stately palaces. The loose atheistical wits at Will's might write such stuff to divert the painted Jezebels of the court; but did it become a minister of the gospel to copy the evil fashions of the world? There had been a time when the cant of such fools would have made Bunyan miserable. But that time was passed; and his mind was now in a firm and healthy state. He saw that, in employing fiction to make truth clear and goodness attractive, he was only following the example which every Christian ought to propose to himself; and he determined to print.

The Pilgrim's Progress stole silently into the world. Not a single copy of the first edition is known to be in existence. The year of publication has not been ascertained. It is probable that, during some months, the little volume circulated only among poor and obscure sectaries. But soon the irresistible charm of a book which gratified the imagination of the reader with all the action and scenery of a fairy tale, which exercised his ingenuity by setting him to discover a multitude of curious analogies, which interested his feelings for human beings, frail like himself, and struggling with temptations from within and from without, which every moment drew a smile from him by some stroke of quaint yet simple pleasantry, and nevertheless left on his mind a sentiment of reverence for God and of sympathy for man, began to produce its effect. In Puritanical circles, from which plays and novels were strictly excluded, that effect was such as no work of genius, though it were superior to the Iliad, to Don Quixote, or to Othello, can ever produce on a mind accustomed to indulge in literary luxury. In 1678 came forth a second edition with additions; and then the demand became immense. In the four following years the book was reprinted six times. The eighth edition, which contains the last improvements made by the author, was published in 1682, the ninth in 1684, the tenth in 1685. The help of the engraver had early been called in; and tens of thousands of children looked with terror and delight on execrable copper plates, which represented Christian thrusting his sword into Apollyon, or writhing in the grasp of Giant Despair. In Scotland, and in some of the colonies, the Pilgrim was even more popular than in his native country. Bunyan has told us, with very pardonable vanity, that in New England his dream was the daily subject of the conversation of thousands, and was thought worthy to appear in the most superb binding. He had numerous admirers in Holland, and among the Huguenots of France. With the pleasures, however, he experienced some of the pains of eminence. Knavish booksellers put forth volumes of trash under his name; and envious scribblers maintained it to be impossible that the poor ignorant tinker should really be the author of the book which was called his.

He took the best way to confound both those who counterfeited him and those who slandered him. He continued to work the gold-field which he had discovered, and to draw from it new treasures, not indeed with quite such ease and in quite such abundance as when the precious soil was still virgin, but yet with success which left all competition far behind. In 1684 appeared the second part of the Pilgrim's Progress. It was soon followed by the Holy War, which, if the Pilgrim's Progress did not exist, would be the best allegory that ever was written.

Bunyan's place in society was now very different from what it had been. There had been a time when many

Dissenting ministers, who could talk Latin and read Greek, had affected to treat him with scorn. But his fame and influence now far exceeded theirs. He had so great an authority among the Baptists that he was popularly called Bishop Bunyan. His episcopal visitations were annual. From Bedford he rode every year to London, and preached there to large and attentive congregations. From London he went his circuit through the country, animating the zeal of his brethren, collecting and distributing alms, and making up quarrels. The magistrates seem in general to have given him little trouble. But there is reason to believe that, in the year 1685, he was in some danger of again occupying his old quarters in Bedford jail. In that year the rash and wicked enterprise of Monmouth gave the government a pretext for prosecuting the Nonconformists; and scarcely one eminent divine of the Presbyterian, Independent, or Baptist persuasion remained unmolested. Baxter was in prison; Howe was driven into exile; Henry was arrested. Two eminent Baptists, with whom Bunyan had been engaged in controversy, were in great peril and distress. Danvers was in danger of being hanged; and Kiffin's grandsons were actually hanged. The tradition is that, during those evil days, Bunyan was forced to disguise himself as a wagoner, and that he preached to his congregation at Bedford in a smock frock, with a cart whip in his hand. But soon a great change took place. James the Second was at open war with the church, and found it necessary to court the Dissenters. Some of the creatures of the government tried to secure the aid of Bunyan. They probably knew that he had written in praise of the indulgence of 1672, and therefore hoped that he might be equally pleased with the indulgence of 1687. But fifteen years of thought, observation, and commerce with the world had made him wiser. Nor were the cases exactly parallel. Charles was a professed Protestant; James was a professed Papist. The object of Charles's indulgence was disguised; the object of James's indulgence was patent. Bunyan was not deceived. He exhorted his hearers to prepare themselves by fasting and prayer for the danger which menaced their civil and religious liberties, and refused even to speak to the courtier who came down to remodel the corporation of Bedford, and who, as was supposed, had it in charge to offer some municipal dignity to the Bishop of the Baptists.

Bunyan did not live to see the Revolution. In the summer of 1688 he undertook to plead the cause of a son with an angry father, and at length prevailed on the old man not to disinherit the young one. This good work cost the benevolent intercessor his life. He had to ride through heavy rain. He came drenched to his lodgings on Snow Hill, was seized with a violent fever, and died in a few days. He was buried in Bunhill Fields; and the spot where he lies is still regarded by the Nonconformists with a feeling which seems scarcely in harmony with the stern spirit of their theology. Many Puritans, to whom the respect paid by Roman Catholics to the reliques and tombs of saints seemed childish or sinful, are said to have begged with their dying breath that their coffins might be placed as near as possible to the coffin of the author of the Pilgrim's Progress.

The fame of Bunyan during his life, and during the century which followed his death, was indeed great, but was almost entirely confined to religious families of the middle and lower classes. Very seldom was he during that time mentioned with respect by any writer of great literary eminence. Young coupled his prose with the poetry of the wretched D'Urfey. In the Spiritual Quixote, the adventures of Christian are ranked with those of Jack the Giant-Killer and John Hickathrift. Cowper ventured to praise the great allegorist, but did not venture to name him. It is a significant circumstance that, till a recent period, all the numerous editions of the Pilgrim's Progress were evidently meant for the cottage and the servants' hall. The paper, the printing, the plates, were all of the meanest description. In general, when the educated minority and the common people differ about the merit of a book, the opinion of the educated minority finally prevails. The Pilgrim's Progress is perhaps the only book about which, after the lapse of a hundred years, the educated minority has come over to the opinion of the common people.

The attempts which have been made to improve and to imitate this book are not to be numbered. It has been done into verse; it has been done into modern English. The Pilgrimage of Tender Conscience, The Pilgrimage of Good Intent, The Pilgrimage of Seek Truth, The Pilgrimage of Theophilus, The Infant Pilgrim, The Hindoo Pilgrim, are among the many feeble copies of the great original. But the peculiar glory of Bunyan is that those who most hated his doctrines have tried to borrow the help of his genius. A Catholic version of his parable may be seen with the head of the Virgin in the title-page. On the other hand, those Antinomians for whom his Calvinism is not strong enough may study the pilgrimage of Hephzibah, in which nothing will be found which can be construed into an admission of free agency and universal redemption. But the most extraordinary of all the acts of vandalism by which a fine work of art was ever defaced was committed so late as the year 1853. It was determined to transform the Pilgrim's Progress into a Tractarian book. The task was not easy; for it was necessary to make the two sacraments the most prominent objects in the allegory; and of all Christian theologians, avowed Quakers excepted, Bunyan was the one in whose system the sacraments held the least prominent place. However, the Wicket Gate became a type of Baptism, and the House Beautiful of the Eucharist. The effect of this change is such as assuredly the ingenious person who made it never contemplated. For, as not a single pilgrim passes through the Wicket Gate in infancy, and as Faithful hurries past the House Beautiful without stopping, the lesson which the fable in its altered shape teaches is that none but adults ought to be baptized, and that the Eucharist may safely be neglected. Nobody would have discovered from the original Pilgrim's Progress that the author was not a Pædobaptist. To turn his book into a book against Pædobaptism was an achievement reserved for an Anglo-Catholic divine. Such blunders must necessarily be committed by every man who mutilates parts of a great work, without taking a comprehensive view of the whole.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

The Encyclopædia Britannica, February, 1856

Oliver Goldsmith, one of the most pleasing English writers of the eighteenth century, was of a Protestant and Saxon family which had been long settled in Ireland, and which had, like most other Protestant and Saxon families, been, in troubled times, harassed and put in fear by the native population. His father, Charles Goldsmith, studied in the reign of Queen Anne at the diocesan school of Elphin, became attached to the daughter of the schoolmaster, married her, took orders, and settled at a place called Pallas in the county of Longford. There he with difficulty supported his wife and children on what he could earn, partly as a curate and partly as a farmer.

At Pallas Oliver Goldsmith was born in November, 1728. That spot was then, for all practical purposes, almost as remote from the busy and splendid capital in which his later years were passed, as any clearing in Upper Canada or any sheep walk in Australasia now is. Even at this day those enthusiasts who venture to make a pilgrimage to the birthplace of the poet are forced to perform the latter part of their journey on foot. The hamlet lies far from any highroad, on a dreary plain which, in wet weather, is often a lake. The lanes would break any jaunting car to pieces; and there are ruts and sloughs through which the most strongly built wheels cannot be dragged.

While Oliver was still a child, his father was presented to a living worth about £200 a year, in the county of Westmeath. The family accordingly quitted their cottage in the wilderness for a spacious house on a frequented road, near the village of Lissoy. Here the boy was taught his letters by a maidservant, and was sent in his seventh year to a village school kept by an old quartermaster on half pay, who professed to teach nothing but reading, writing, and arithmetic, but who had an inexhaustible fund of stories about ghosts, banshees, and fairies, about the great Rapparee chiefs, Baldearg O'Donnell and galloping Hogan, and about the exploits of Peterborough and Stanhope, the surprise of Monjuich, and the glorious disaster of Brihuega. This man must have been of the Protestant religion; but he was of the aboriginal race, and not only spoke the Irish language, but could pour forth unpremeditated Irish verses. Oliver early became, and through life continued to be, a passionate admirer of the Irish music, and especially of the compositions of Carolan, some of the last notes of whose harp he heard. It ought to be added that Oliver, though by birth one of the Englishry, and though connected by numerous ties with the Established Church, never showed the least sign of that contemptuous antipathy with which, in his days, the ruling minority in Ireland too generally regarded the subject majority. So far indeed was he from sharing in the opinions and feelings of the caste to which he belonged, that he conceived an aversion to the Glorious and Immortal Memory, and, even when George the Third was on the throne, maintained that nothing but the restoration of the banished dynasty could save the country.

From the humble academy kept by the old soldier Goldsmith was removed in his ninth year. He went to several grammar schools, and acquired some knowledge of the ancient languages. His life at this time seems to have been far from happy. He had, as appears from the admirable portrait of him at Knowle, features harsh even to ugliness. The smallpox had set its mark on him with more than usual severity. His stature was small, and his limbs ill put together. Among boys little tenderness is shown to personal defects; and the ridicule excited by poor Oliver's appearance was heightened by a peculiar simplicity and a disposition to blunder which he retained to the last. He became the common butt of boys and masters, was pointed at as a fright in the playground, and flogged as a dunce in the schoolroom. When he had risen to eminence, those who had once derided him ransacked their memory for the events of his early years, and recited repartees and couplets which had dropped from him, and which, though little noticed at the time, were supposed, a quarter of a century later, to indicate the powers which produced The Vicar of Wakefield and The Deserted Village.

In his seventeenth year Oliver went up to Trinity College, Dublin, as a sizar. The sizars paid nothing for food and tuition, and very little for lodging; but they had to perform some menial services from which they have long been relieved. They swept the court; they carried up the dinner to the fellows' table, and changed the plates and poured out the ale of the rulers of the society. Goldsmith was quartered, not alone, in a garret, on the window of which his name, scrawled by himself, is still read with interest.[1] From such garrets many men of less parts than his have made their way to the woolsack or to the episcopal bench. But Goldsmith, while he suffered all the humiliations, threw away all the advantages, of his situation. He neglected the studies of the place, stood low at the examinations, was turned down to the bottom of his class for playing the buffoon in the lecture room, was severely reprimanded for pumping on a constable, and was caned by a brutal tutor for giving a ball in the attic story of the college to some gay youths and damsels from the city.

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[1] The glass on which the name is written has, as we are informed by a writer in Notes and Queries (2d S. ix. p. 91), been enclosed in a frame and deposited in the Manuscript Room of the College Library, where it is still to be seen.

While Oliver was leading at Dublin a life divided between squalid distress and squalid dissipation, his father died, leaving a mere pittance. The youth obtained his bachelor's degree, and left the university. During some time the humble dwelling to which his widowed mother had retired was his home. He was now in his twenty-first year; it was necessary that he should do something; and his education seemed to have fitted him to do nothing but to dress himself in gaudy colors, of which he was as fond as a magpie, to take a hand at cards, to sing Irish airs, to play the flute, to angle in summer, and to tell ghost stories by the fire in winter. He tried five or six professions in turn without success. He applied for ordination; but, as he applied in scarlet clothes, he was speedily turned out of the episcopal palace. He then became tutor in an opulent family, but soon quitted his situation in consequence of a dispute about play. Then he determined to emigrate to America. His relations, with much satisfaction, saw him set out for Cork on a good horse, with thirty pounds in his pocket. But in six weeks he came back on a miserable hack, without a penny, and informed his mother that the ship in which he had taken his passage, having got a fair wind while he was at a party of pleasure, had sailed without him. Then he resolved to study the law. A generous kinsman advanced fifty pounds. With this sum Goldsmith went to Dublin, was enticed into a gaming house, and lost every shilling. He then thought of medicine. A small purse was made up, and in his twenty-fourth year he was sent to Edinburgh. At Edinburgh he passed eighteen months in nominal attendance on lectures, and picked up some superficial information about chemistry and natural history. Thence he went to Leyden, still pretending to study physic. He left that celebrated university, the third university at which he had resided, in his twenty-seventh year, without a degree, with the merest smattering of medical knowledge, and with no property but his clothes and his flute. His flute, however, proved a useful friend. He rambled on foot through Flanders, France, and Switzerland, playing tunes which everywhere set the peasantry dancing, and which often procured for him a supper and a bed. He wandered as far as Italy. His musical performances, indeed, were not to the taste of the Italians; but he contrived to live on the alms which he obtained at the gates of convents. It should, however, be observed that the stories which he told about this part of his life ought to be received with great caution; for strict veracity was never one of his virtues; and a man who is ordinarily inaccurate in narration is likely to be more than ordinarily inaccurate when he talks about his own travels. Goldsmith, indeed, was so regardless of truth as to assert in print that he was present at a most interesting conversation between Voltaire and Fontenelle, and that this conversation took place at Paris. Now it is certain that Voltaire never was within a hundred leagues of Paris during the whole time which Goldsmith passed on the Continent.

In 1756 the wanderer landed at Dover, without a shilling, without a friend, and without a calling. He had, indeed, if his own unsupported evidence may be trusted, obtained from the University of Padua a doctor's degree; but this dignity proved utterly useless to him. In England his flute was not in request: there were no convents; and he was forced to have recourse to a series of desperate expedients. He turned strolling player; but his face and figure were ill suited to the boards even of the humblest theatre. He pounded drugs and ran about London with phials for charitable chemists. He joined a swarm of beggars, which made its nest in Axe Yard. He was for a time usher of a school, and felt the miseries and humiliations of this situation so keenly that he thought it a promotion to be permitted to earn his bread as a bookseller's hack; but he soon found the new yoke more galling than the old one, and was glad to become an usher again. He obtained a medical appointment in the service of the East India Company; but the appointment was speedily revoked. Why it was revoked we are not told. The subject was one on which he never liked to talk. It is probable that he was incompetent to perform the duties of the place. Then he presented himself at Surgeons' Hall for examination, as mate to a naval hospital. Even to so humble a post he was found unequal. By this time the schoolmaster whom he had served for a morsel of food and the third part of a bed was no more. Nothing remained but to return to the lowest drudgery of literature. Goldsmith took a garret in a miserable court, to which he had to climb from the brink of Fleet Ditch by a dizzy ladder of flagstones called Breakneck Steps. The Court and the ascent have long disappeared; but old Londoners will remember both. Here, at thirty, the unlucky adventurer sat down to toil like a galley slave.

In the succeeding six years he sent to the press some things which have survived and many which have perished. He produced articles for reviews, magazines, and newspapers; children's books which, bound in gilt paper and adorned with hideous woodcuts, appeared in the window of the once far-famed shop at the corner of St. Paul's Churchyard; An Inquiry into the State of Polite Learning in Europe, which, though of little or no value, is still reprinted among his works; a Life of Beau Nash, which is not reprinted, though it well deserves to be so; a superficial and incorrect, but very readable, History of England, in a series of letters purporting to be addressed by a nobleman to his son; and some very lively and amusing Sketches of London Society, in a series of letters purporting to be addressed by a Chinese traveller to his friends. All these works were anonymous; but some of them were well known to be Goldsmith's; and he gradually rose in the estimation of the booksellers for whom he drudged. He was, indeed, emphatically a popular writer. For accurate research or grave disquisition he was not well qualified by nature or by education. He knew nothing accurately: his reading had been desultory; nor had he meditated deeply on what he had read. He had seen much of the world; but he had noticed and retained little more of what he had seen than some grotesque incidents and characters which had happened to strike his fancy. But, though his mind was very scantily stored with materials, he used what materials he had in such a way as to produce a wonderful effect. There have been many greater writers; but perhaps no writer was ever more uniformly agreeable. His style was always pure and easy, and, on proper occasions, pointed and energetic. His narratives were always amusing, his descriptions always picturesque, his humor rich and joyous, yet not without an occasional tinge of amiable sadness. About everything that he wrote, serious or sportive, there was a certain natural grace and decorum, hardly to be expected from a man a great part of whose life had been passed among thieves and beggars, street-walkers and merry andrews, in those squalid dens which are the reproach of great capitals.

As his name gradually became known, the circle of his acquaintance widened. He was introduced to Johnson, who was then considered as the first of living English writers; to Reynolds, the first of English painters; and to Burke, who had not yet entered Parliament, but had distinguished himself greatly by his writings and by the eloquence of his conversation. With these eminent men Goldsmith became intimate. In 1763 he was one of the nine original members of that celebrated fraternity which has sometimes been called the Literary Club, but which has always disclaimed that epithet, and still glories in the simple name of The Club.

By this time Goldsmith had quitted his miserable dwelling at the top of Breakneck Steps, and had taken chambers in the more civilized region of the Inns of

Court. But he was still often reduced to pitiable shifts. Towards the close of 1764 his rent was so long in arrear that his landlady one morning called in the help of a sheriff's officer. The debtor, in great perplexity, dispatched a messenger to Johnson; and Johnson, always friendly, though often surly, sent back the messenger with a guinea, and promised to follow speedily. He came, and found that Goldsmith had changed the guinea, and was railing at the landlady over a bottle of madeira. Johnson put the cork into the bottle, and entreated his friend to consider calmly how money was to be procured. Goldsmith said that he had a novel ready for the press. Johnson glanced at the manuscript, saw that there were good things in it, took it to a bookseller, sold it for £60, and soon returned with the money. The rent was paid; and the sheriff's officer withdrew. According to one story, Goldsmith gave his landlady a sharp reprimand for her treatment of him; according to another, he insisted on her joining him in a bowl of punch. Both stories are probably true. The novel which was thus ushered into the world was The Vicar of Wakefield.

But before The Vicar of Wakefield appeared in print, came the great crisis of Goldsmith's literary life. In Christmas week, 1764, he published a poem, entitled The Traveller. It was the first work to which he had put his name; and it at once raised him to the rank of a legitimate English classic. The opinion of the most skilful critics was that nothing finer had appeared in verse since the fourth book of the Dunciad. In one respect The Traveller differs from all Goldsmith's other writings. In general his designs were bad, and his execution good. In The Traveller, the execution, though deserving of much praise, is far inferior to the design. No philosophical poem, ancient or modern, has a plan so noble, and at the same time so simple. An English wanderer, seated on a crag among the Alps, near the point where three great countries meet, looks down on the boundless prospect, reviews his long pilgrimage, recalls the varieties of scenery, of climate, of government, of religion, of national character, which he has observed, and comes to the conclusion, just or unjust, that our happiness depends little on political institutions, and much on the temper and regulation of our own minds.

While the fourth edition of The Traveller was on the counters of the booksellers, The Vicar of Wakefield appeared, and rapidly obtained a popularity which has lasted down to our own time, and which is likely to last as long as our language. The fable is indeed one of the worst that ever was constructed. It wants, not merely that probability which ought to be found in a tale of common English life, but that consistency which ought to be found even in the wildest fiction about witches, giants, and fairies. But the earlier chapters have all the sweetness of pastoral poetry, together with all the vivacity of comedy. Moses and his spectacles, the vicar and his monogamy, the sharper and his cosmogony, the squire proving from Aristotle that relatives are related, Olivia preparing herself for the arduous task of converting a rakish lover by studying the controversy between Robinson Crusoe and Friday, the great ladies with their scandal about Sir Tomkyn's amours and Dr. Burdock's verses, and Mr. Burchell with his "Fudge," have caused as much harmless mirth as has ever been caused by matter packed into so small a number of pages. The latter part of the tale is unworthy of the beginning. As we approach the catastrophe, the absurdities lie thicker and thicker; and the gleams of pleasantry become rarer and rarer.

The success which had attended Goldsmith as a novelist emboldened him to try his fortune as a dramatist. He wrote The Good-Natured Man, a piece which had a worse fate than it deserved. Garrick refused to produce it at Drury Lane. It was acted at Covent Garden in 1768, but was coldly received. The author, however, cleared by his benefit nights, and by the sale of the copyright, no less than £500, five times as much as he had made by The Traveller and The Vicar of Wakefield together. The plot of The Good-Natured Man is, like almost all Goldsmith's plots, very ill constructed. But some passages are exquisitely ludicrous; much more ludicrous, indeed, than suited the taste of the town at that time. A canting, mawkish play, entitled False Delicacy, had just had an immense run. Sentimentality was all the mode. During some years, more tears were shed at comedies than at tragedies; and a pleasantry which moved the audience to anything more than a grave smile was reprobated as low. It is not strange, therefore, that the very best scene in The Good-Natured Man — that in which Miss Richland finds her lover attended by the bailiff and the bailiff's follower in full court dresses — should have been mercilessly hissed, and should have been omitted after the first night.

In 1770 appeared The Deserted Village. In mere diction and versification this celebrated poem is fully equal, perhaps superior, to The Traveller; and it is generally preferred to The Traveller by that large class of readers who think, with Bayes in The Rehearsal, that the only use of a plan is to bring in fine things. More discerning judges, however, while they admire the beauty of the details, are shocked by one unpardonable fault which pervades the whole. The fault we mean is not that theory about wealth and luxury which has so often been censured by political economists. The theory is indeed false; but the poem, considered merely as a poem, is not necessarily the worse on that account. The finest poem in the Latin language, indeed the finest didactic poem in any language, was written in defence of the silliest and meanest of all systems of natural and moral philosophy. A poet may easily be pardoned for reasoning ill; but he cannot be pardoned for describing ill, for observing the world in which he lives so carelessly that his portraits bear no resemblance to the originals, for exhibiting as copies from real life monstrous combinations of things which never were and never could be found together. What would be thought of a painter who should mix August and January in one landscape, who should introduce a frozen river into a harvest scene? Would it be a sufficient defence of such a picture to say that every part was exquisitely colored, that the green hedges, the apple trees loaded with fruit, the wagons reeling under the yellow sheaves, and the sunburned reapers wiping their foreheads, were very fine, and that the ice and the boys sliding were also very fine? To such a picture The Deserted Village bears a great resemblance. It is made up of incongruous parts. The village in its happy days is a true English village. The village in its decay is an Irish village. The felicity and the misery which Goldsmith has brought close together belong to two different countries and to two different stages in the progress of society. He had assuredly never seen in his native island such a rural paradise, such a seat of plenty, content, and tranquillity, as his Auburn. He had assuredly never seen in England all the inhabitants of such a paradise turned out of their homes in one day and forced to emigrate in a body to America. The hamlet he had probably seen in Kent; the ejectment he had probably seen in Munster; but, by joining the two, he has produced something which never was and never will be seen in any part of the world.

In 1773 Goldsmith tried his chance at Covent Garden with a second play, She Stoops to Conquer. The manager was not without great difficulty induced to bring this piece out. The sentimental comedy still reigned; and Goldsmith's comedies were not sentimental. The Good-Natured Man had been too funny to succeed; yet the mirth of The Good-Natured Man was sober when compared with the rich drollery of She Stoops to Conquer, which is, in truth, an incomparable farce in five acts.

On this occasion, however, genius triumphed. Pit, boxes, and galleries were in a constant roar of laughter. If any bigoted admirer of Kelly and Cumberland ventured to hiss or groan, he was speedily silenced by a general cry of "Turn him out!" or "Throw him over!" Two generations have since confirmed the verdict which was pronounced on that night.

While Goldsmith was writing The Deserted Village and She Stoops to Conquer, he was employed on works of a very different kind, — works from which he derived little reputation but much profit. He compiled for the use of schools a History of Rome, by which he made £300; a History of England, by which he made £600; a History of Greece, for which he received £250; a Natural History, for which the booksellers covenanted to pay him 800 guineas. These works he produced without any elaborate research, by merely selecting, abridging, and translating into his own clear, pure, and flowing language what he found in books well known to the world, but too bulky or too dry for boys and girls. He committed some strange blunders, for he knew nothing with accuracy. Thus in his History of England he tells us that Naseby is in Yorkshire; nor did he correct this mistake when the book was reprinted. He was very nearly hoaxed into putting into the History of Greece an account of a battle between Alexander the Great and Montezuma. In his Animated Nature he relates, with faith and with perfect gravity, all the most absurd lies which he could find in books of travels about gigantic Patagonians, monkeys that preach sermons, nightingales that repeat long conversations. "If he can tell a horse from a cow," said Johnson, "that is the extent of his knowledge of zoölogy." How little Goldsmith was qualified to write about the physical sciences is sufficiently proved by two anecdotes. He on one occasion denied that the sun is longer in the northern than in the southern signs. It was vain to cite the authority of Maupertuis. "Maupertuis!"

he cried, "I understand those matters better than Maupertuis!" On another occasion he, in defiance of the evidence of his own senses, maintained obstinately, and even angrily, that he chewed his dinner by moving his upper jaw.

Yet, ignorant as Goldsmith was, few writers have done more to make the first steps in the laborious road to knowledge easy and pleasant. His compilations are widely distinguished from the compilations of ordinary bookmakers. He was a great, perhaps an unequalled, master of the arts of selection and condensation. In these respects his histories of Rome and of England, and still more his own abridgments of these histories, well deserve to be studied. In general nothing is less attractive than an epitome; but the epitomes of Goldsmith, even when most concise, are always amusing; and to read them is considered by intelligent children, not as a task, but as a pleasure.

Goldsmith might now be considered as a prosperous man. He had the means of living in comfort, and even in what to one who had so often slept in barns and on bulks must have been luxury. His fame was great and was constantly rising. He lived in what was intellectually far the best society of the kingdom, — in a society in which no talent or accomplishment was wanting, and in which the art of conversation was cultivated with splendid success. There probably were never four talkers more admirable in four different ways than Johnson, Burke, Beauclerk, and Garrick; and Goldsmith was on terms of intimacy with all the four. He aspired to share in their colloquial renown; but never was ambition more unfortunate. It may seem strange that a man who wrote with so much perspicuity, vivacity, and grace should have been, whenever he took a part in conversation, an empty, noisy, blundering rattle. But on this point the evidence is overwhelming. So extraordinary was the contrast between Goldsmith's published works and the silly things which he said, that Horace Walpole described him as an inspired idiot. "Noll," said Garrick, "wrote like an angel, and talked like poor Poll." Chamier declared that it was a hard exercise of faith to believe that so foolish a chatterer could have really written The Traveller. Even Boswell could say, with contemptuous compassion, that he liked very well to hear honest Goldsmith run on. "Yes, sir," said Johnson; "but he should not like to hear himself." Minds differ as rivers differ. There are transparent and sparkling rivers from which it is delightful to drink as they flow; to such rivers the minds of such men as Burke and Johnson may be compared. But there are rivers of which the water when first drawn is turbid and noisome, but becomes pellucid as crystal, and delicious to the taste, if it be suffered to stand till it has deposited a sediment; and such a river is a type of the mind of Goldsmith. His first thoughts on every subject were confused even to absurdity; but they required only a little time to work themselves clear. When he wrote they had that time; and therefore his readers pronounced him a man of genius; but when he talked he talked nonsense, and made himself the laughingstock of his hearers. He was painfully sensible of his inferiority in conversation; he felt every failure keenly; yet he had not sufficient judgment and self-command to hold his tongue. His animal spirits and vanity were always impelling him to try to do the one thing which he could not do. After every attempt he felt that he had exposed himself, and writhed with shame and vexation; yet the next moment he began again.

His associates seem to have regarded him with kindness, which, in spite of their admiration of his writings, was not unmixed with contempt. In truth, there was in his character much to love, but very little to respect. His heart was soft, even to weakness: he was so generous that he quite forgot to be just; he forgave injuries so readily that he might be said to invite them; and was so liberal to beggars that he had nothing left for his tailor and his butcher. He was vain, sensual, frivolous, profuse, improvident. One vice of a darker shade was imputed to him, envy. But there is not the least reason to believe that this bad passion, though it sometimes made him wince and utter fretful exclamations, ever impelled him to injure by wicked arts the reputation of any of his rivals. The truth probably is, that he was not more envious, but merely less prudent, than his neighbors. His heart was on his lips. All those small jealousies, which are but too common among men of letters, but which a man of letters who is also a man of the world does his best to conceal, Goldsmith avowed with the simplicity of a child. When he was envious, instead of affecting indifference, instead of damning with faint praise, instead of doing injuries slyly and in the dark, he told everybody that he was envious. "Do not, pray, do not talk of Johnson in such terms," he said to Boswell; "you harrow up my very soul." George Steevens and Cumberland were men far too cunning to say such a thing. They would have echoed the praises of the man whom they envied, and then have sent to the newspapers anonymous libels upon him. Both what was good and what was bad in Goldsmith's character was to his associates a perfect security that he would never commit such villainy. He was neither ill-natured enough, nor long-headed enough, to be guilty of any malicious act which required contrivance and disguise.

Goldsmith has sometimes been represented as a man of genius, cruelly treated by the world, and doomed to struggle with difficulties which at last broke his heart. But no representation can be more remote from the truth. He did, indeed, go through much sharp misery before he had done anything considerable in literature. But, after his name had appeared on the title-page of The Traveller, he had none but himself to blame for his distresses. His average income, during the last seven years of his life, certainly exceeded £400 a year; and £400 a year ranked among the incomes of that day at least as high as £800 a year would rank at present. A single man living in the Temple with £400 a year might then be called opulent. Not one in ten of the young gentlemen of good families who were studying the law there had so much. But all the wealth which Lord Clive had brought from Bengal, and Sir Lawrence Dundas from Germany, joined together, would not have sufficed for Goldsmith. He spent twice as much as he had. He wore fine clothes, gave dinners of several courses, paid court to venal beauties. He had also, it should be remembered, to the honor of his heart, though not of his head, a guinea, or five, or ten, according to the state of his purse, ready for any tale of distress, true or false. But it was not in dress or feasting, in promiscuous amours or promiscuous charities, that his chief expense lay. He had been from boyhood a gambler, and at once the most sanguine and the most unskilful of gamblers. For a time he put off the day of inevitable ruin by temporary expedients. He obtained advances from booksellers, by promising to execute works which he never began. But at length this source of supply failed. He owed more than £2000; and he saw no hope of extrication from his embarrassments. His spirits and health gave way. He was attacked by a nervous fever, which he thought himself competent to treat. It would have been happy for him if his medical skill had been appreciated as justly by himself as by others. Notwithstanding the degree which he pretended to have received at Padua, he could procure no patients. "I do not practise," he once said; "I make it a rule to prescribe only for my friends." "Pray, dear Doctor," said Beauclerk, "alter your rule; and prescribe only for your enemies." Goldsmith now, in spite of this excellent advice, prescribed for himself. The remedy aggravated the malady. The sick man was induced to call in real physicians; and they at one time imagined that they had cured the disease. Still his weakness and restlessness continued. He could get no sleep. He could take no food. "You are worse," said one of his medical attendants, "than you should be from the degree of fever which you have. Is your mind at ease?" "No, it is not," were the last recorded words of Oliver Goldsmith. He died on the third of April, 1774, in his forty-sixth year. He was laid in the churchyard of the Temple; but the spot was not marked by any inscription, and is now forgotten. The coffin was followed by Burke and Reynolds. Both these great men were sincere mourners. Burke, when he heard of Goldsmith's death, had burst into a flood of tears. Reynolds had been so much moved by the news that he had flung aside his brush and palette for the day.

A short time after Goldsmith's death, a little poem appeared, which will, as long as our language lasts, associate the names of his two illustrious friends with his own. It has already been mentioned that he sometimes felt keenly the sarcasm which his wild, blundering talk brought upon him. He was, not long before his last illness, provoked into retaliating. He wisely betook himself to his pen; and at that weapon he proved himself a match for all his assailants together. Within a small compass he drew with a singularly easy and vigorous pencil the characters of nine or ten of his intimate associates. Though this little work did not receive his last touches, it must always be regarded as a masterpiece. It is impossible, however, not to wish that four or five likenesses which have no interest for posterity were wanting to that noble gallery, and that their places were supplied by sketches of Johnson and Gibbon, as happy and vivid as the sketches of Burke and Garrick.

Some of Goldsmith's friends and admirers honored him with a cenotaph in Westminster Abbey. Nollekens was the sculptor; and Johnson wrote the inscription. It is much to be lamented that Johnson did not leave to posterity a more durable and a more valuable memorial of his friend. A Life of Goldsmith would have been an inestimable addition to the Lives of the Poets. No man appreciated Goldsmith's writings more justly than Johnson; no man was better acquainted with Goldsmith's character and habits; and no man was more competent to delineate with truth and spirit the peculiarities of a mind in which great powers were found in company with great weaknesses. But the list of poets to whose works Johnson was requested by the booksellers to furnish prefaces ended with Lyttleton, who died in 1773. The line seems to have been drawn expressly for the purpose of excluding the person whose portrait would have most fitly closed the series. Goldsmith, however, has been fortunate in his biographers. Within a few years his Life has been written by Mr. Prior, by Mr. Washington Irving, and by Mr. Forster. The diligence of Mr. Prior deserves great praise; the style of Mr. Washington Irving is always pleasing; but the highest place must, in justice, be assigned to the eminently interesting work of Mr. Forster.

SAMUEL JOHNSON

The Encyclopædia Britannica, December, 1856

Samuel Johnson, one of the most eminent English writers of the eighteenth century, was the son of Michael Johnson, who was at the beginning of that century a magistrate of Lichfield, and a bookseller of great note in the midland counties. Michael's abilities and attainments seem to have been considerable. He was so well acquainted with the contents of the volumes which he exposed to sale, that the country rectors of Staffordshire and Worcestershire thought him an oracle on points of learning. Between him and the clergy, indeed, there was a strong religious and political sympathy. He was a zealous churchman, and, though he had qualified himself for municipal office by taking the oaths to the sovereigns in possession, was to the last a Jacobite in heart. At his house, a house which is still pointed out to every traveller who visits Lichfield, Samuel was born on the eighteenth of September, 1709. In the child, the physical, intellectual, and moral peculiarities which afterwards distinguished the man were plainly discernible; great muscular strength accompanied by much awkwardness and many infirmities; great quickness of parts, with a morbid propensity to sloth and procrastination; a kind and generous heart, with a gloomy and irritable temper. He had inherited from his ancestors a scrofulous taint, which it was beyond the power of medicine to remove. His parents were weak enough to believe that the royal touch was a specific for this malady. In his third year he was taken up to London, inspected by the court surgeon, prayed over by the court chaplains, and stroked and presented with a piece of gold by Queen Anne. One of his earliest recollections was that of a stately lady in a diamond stomacher and a long black hood. Her hand was applied in vain. The boy's features, which were originally noble and not irregular, were distorted by his malady. His cheeks were deeply scared. He lost for a time the sight of one eye; and he saw but very imperfectly with the other. But the force of his mind overcame every impediment. Indolent as he was, he acquired knowledge with such ease and rapidity that at every school to which he was sent he was soon the best scholar. From sixteen to eighteen he resided at home, and was left to his own devices. He learned much at this time, though his studies were without guidance and without plan. He ransacked his father's shelves, dipped into a multitude of books, read what was interesting, and passed over what was dull. An ordinary lad would have acquired little or no useful knowledge in such a way; but much that was dull to ordinary lads was interesting to Samuel. He read little Greek; for his proficiency in that language was not such that he could take much pleasure in the masters of Attic poetry and eloquence. But he had left school a good Latinist; and he soon acquired, in the large and miscellaneous library of which he now had the command, an extensive knowledge of Latin literature. That Augustan delicacy of taste which is the boast of the great public schools of England he never possessed. But he was early familiar with some classical writers who were quite unknown to the best scholars in the sixth form at Eton. He was peculiarly attracted by the works of the great restorers of learning. Once, while searching for some apples, he found a huge folio volume of Petrarch's works. The name excited his curiosity; and he eagerly devoured hundreds of pages. Indeed, the diction and versification of his own Latin compositions show that he had paid at least as much attention to modern copies from the antique as to the original models.

While he was thus irregularly educating himself, his family was sinking into hopeless poverty. Old Michael Johnson was much better qualified to pore upon books, and to talk about them, than to trade in them. His business declined; his debts increased; it was with difficulty that the daily expenses of his household were defrayed. It was out of his power to support his son at either university; but a wealthy neighbor offered assistance; and, in reliance on promises which proved to be of very little value, Samuel was entered at Pembroke College, Oxford. When the young scholar presented himself to the rulers of that society, they were amazed not more by his ungainly figure and eccentric manners than by the quantity of extensive and curious information which he had picked up during many months of desultory but not unprofitable study. On the first day of his residence he surprised his teachers by quoting Macrobius; and one of the most learned among them declared that he had never known a freshman of equal attainments.

At Oxford Johnson resided during about three years. He was poor, even to raggedness; and his appearance excited a mirth and a pity which were equally intolerable to his haughty spirit. He was driven from the quadrangle of Christ Church by the sneering looks which the members of that aristocratical society cast at the holes in his shoes. Some charitable person placed a new pair at his door; but he spurned them away in a fury. Distress made him, not servile, but reckless and ungovernable. No opulent gentleman commoner, panting for one-and-twenty, could have treated the academical authorities with more gross disrespect. The needy scholar was generally to be seen under the gate of Pembroke, a gate now adorned with his effigy, haranguing a circle of lads, over whom, in spite of his tattered gown and dirty linen, his wit and audacity gave him an undisputed ascendency. In every mutiny against the discipline of the college he was the ringleader. Much was pardoned, however, to a youth so highly distinguished by abilities and acquirements. He had early made himself known by turning Pope's Messiah into Latin verse. The style and rhythm, indeed, were not exactly Virgilian; but the translation found many admirers, and was read with pleasure by Pope himself.

The time drew near at which Johnson would, in the ordinary course of things, have become a Bachelor of Arts, but he was at the end of his resources. Those promises of support on which he had relied had not been kept. His family could do nothing for him. His debts to Oxford tradesmen were small indeed, yet larger than he could pay. In the autumn of 1731, he was under the necessity of quitting the university without a degree. In the following winter his father died. The old man left but a pittance; and of that pittance almost the whole was appropriated to the support of his widow. The property to which Samuel succeeded amounted to no more than twenty pounds.

His life, during the thirty years which followed, was one hard struggle with poverty. The misery of that struggle needed no aggravation, but was aggravated by the sufferings of an unsound body and an unsound mind. Before the young man left the university, his hereditary malady had broken forth in a singularly cruel form. He had become an incurable hypochondriac. He said long after that he had been mad all his life, or at least not perfectly sane; and, in truth, eccentricities less strange than his have often been thought grounds sufficient for absolving felons, and for setting aside wills. His grimaces, his gestures, his mutterings, sometimes diverted and sometimes terrified people who did not know him. At a dinner table he would, in a fit of absence, stoop down and twitch off a lady's shoe. He would amaze a drawing-room by suddenly ejaculating a clause of the Lord's Prayer. He would conceive an unintelligible aversion to a particular alley, and perform a great circuit rather than see the hateful place. He would set his heart on touching every post in the streets through which he walked. If by any chance he missed a post, he would go back a hundred yards and repair the omission. Under the influence of his disease, his senses became morbidly torpid, and his imagination morbidly active. At one time he would stand poring on the town clock without being able to tell the hour. At another, he would distinctly hear his mother, who was many miles off, calling him by his name. But this was not the worst. A deep melancholy took possession of him, and gave a dark tinge to all his views of human nature and of human destiny. Such wretchedness as he endured has driven many men to shoot themselves or drown themselves. But he was under no temptation to commit suicide. He was sick of life; but he was afraid of death; and he shuddered at every sight or sound which reminded him of the inevitable hour. In religion he found but little comfort during his long and frequent fits of dejection; for his religion partook of his own character. The light from heaven shone on him indeed, but not in a direct line, or with its own pure splendor. The rays had to struggle through a disturbing medium; they reached him refracted, dulled, and discolored by the thick gloom which had settled on his soul; and, though they might be sufficiently clear to guide him, were too dim to cheer him.

With such infirmities of body and of mind, this celebrated man was left, at two-and-twenty, to fight his way through the world. He remained during about five years in the midland counties. At Lichfield, his birthplace and his early home, he had inherited some friends and acquired others. He was kindly noticed by Henry Hervey, a gay officer of noble family, who happened to be quartered there. Gilbert Walmesley, registrar of the ecclesiastical court of the diocese, a man of distinguished parts, learning, and knowledge of the world, did himself honor by patronizing the young adventurer, whose repulsive person, unpolished manners, and squalid garb moved many of the petty aristocracy of the neighborhood to laughter or to disgust. At Lichfield, however, Johnson could find no way of earning a livelihood. He became usher of a grammar school in Leicestershire; he resided as a humble companion in the house of a country gentleman; but a life of dependence was insupportable to his haughty spirit. He repaired to Birmingham, and there earned a few guineas by literary drudgery. In that town he printed a translation, little noticed at the time, and long forgotten, of a Latin book about Abyssinia. He then put forth proposals for publishing by subscription the poems of Politian, with notes containing a history of modern Latin verse; but subscriptions did not come in, and the volume never appeared.

While leading this vagrant and miserable life, Johnson fell in love. The object of his passion was Mrs. Elizabeth Porter, a widow who had children as old as himself. To ordinary spectators, the lady appeared to be a short, fat, coarse woman, painted half an inch thick, dressed in gaudy colors, and fond of exhibiting provincial airs and graces which were not exactly those of the Queensberrys and Lepels. To Johnson, however, whose passions were strong, whose eyesight was too weak to distinguish ceruse from natural bloom, and who had seldom or never been in the same room with a woman of real fashion, his Titty, as he called her, was the most beautiful, graceful, and accomplished of her sex. That his admiration was unfeigned cannot be doubted; for she was as poor as himself. She accepted, with a readiness which did her little honor, the addresses of a suitor who might have been her son. The marriage, however, in spite of occasional wranglings, proved happier than might have been expected. The lover continued to be under the illusions of the wedding-day till the lady died, in her sixty-fourth year. On her monument he placed an inscription extolling the charms of her person and of her manners; and when, long after her decease, he had occasion to mention her, he exclaimed, with a tenderness half ludicrous, half pathetic, "Pretty creature!"

His marriage made it necessary for him to exert himself more strenuously than he had hitherto done. He took a house in the neighborhood of his native town, and advertised for pupils. But eighteen months passed away; and only three pupils came to his academy. Indeed, his appearance was so strange, and his temper so violent, that his schoolroom must have resembled an ogre's den. Nor was the tawdry painted grandmother whom he called his Titty well qualified to make provision for the comfort of young gentlemen. David Garrick, who was one of the pupils, used, many years later, to throw the best company of London into convulsions of laughter by mimicking the endearments of this extraordinary pair.

At length Johnson, in the twenty-eighth year of his age, determined to seek his fortune in the capital as a literary adventurer. He set out with a few guineas, three acts of the tragedy of Irene in manuscript, and two or three letters of introduction from his friend Walmesley.

Never, since literature became a calling in England, had it been a less gainful calling than at the time when Johnson took up his residence in London. In the preceding generation a writer of eminent merit was sure to be munificently rewarded by the government. The least that he could expect was a pension or a sinecure place; and, if he showed any aptitude for politics, he might hope to be a member of Parliament, a lord of the treasury, an ambassador, a secretary of state. It would be easy, on the other hand, to name several writers of the nineteenth century of whom the least successful has received forty thousand pounds from the booksellers. But Johnson entered on his vocation in the most dreary part of the dreary interval which separated two ages of prosperity. Literature had ceased to flourish under the patronage of the great, and had not begun to flourish under the patronage of the public. One man of letters, indeed, Pope, had acquired by his pen what was then considered as a handsome fortune, and lived on a footing of equality with nobles and ministers of state. But this was a solitary exception. Even an author whose reputation was established, and whose works were popular,—such an author as Thomson, whose Seasons were in every library; such an author as Fielding, whose Pasquin had had a greater run than any drama since the Beggar's Opera,—was sometimes glad to obtain, by pawning his best coat, the means of dining on tripe at a cookshop underground, where he could wipe his hands, after his greasy meal, on the back of a Newfoundland dog. It is easy, therefore, to imagine what humiliations and privations must have awaited the novice who had still to earn a name. One of the publishers to whom Johnson applied for employment measured with a scornful eye that athletic though uncouth frame, and exclaimed, "You had better get a porter's knot, and carry trunks!" Nor was the advice bad; for a porter was likely to be as plentifully fed, and as comfortably lodged, as a poet.

Some time appears to have elapsed before Johnson was able to form any literary connection from which he could expect more than bread for the day which was passing over him. He never forgot the generosity with which Hervey, who was now residing in London, relieved his wants during this time of trial. "Harry Hervey," said the old philosopher many years later, "was a vicious man; but he was very kind to me. If you call a dog Hervey I shall love him." At Hervey's table Johnson sometimes enjoyed feasts which were made more agreeable by contrast. But in general he dined, and thought that he dined well, on sixpennyworth of meat, and a pennyworth of bread, at an alehouse near Drury Lane.

The effect of the privations and sufferings which he endured at this time was discernible to the last in his temper and his deportment. His manners had never been courtly. They now became almost savage. Being frequently under the necessity of wearing shabby coats and dirty shirts, he became a confirmed sloven. Being often very hungry when he sat down to his meals, he contracted a habit of eating with ravenous greediness. Even to the end of his life, and even at the tables of the great, the sight of food affected him as it affects wild beasts and birds of prey. His taste in cookery, formed in subterranean ordinaries and alamode beefshops, was far from delicate. Whenever he was so fortunate as to have near him a hare that had been kept too long, or a meat pie made with rancid butter, he gorged himself with such violence that his veins swelled, and the moisture broke out on his forehead. The affronts which his poverty emboldened stupid and low-minded men to offer to him would have broken a mean spirit into sycophancy, but made him rude even to ferocity. Unhappily the insolence which, while it was defensive, was pardonable, and in some sense respectable, accompanied him into societies where he was treated with courtesy and kindness. He was repeatedly provoked into striking those who had taken liberties with him. All the sufferers, however, were wise enough to abstain from talking about their beatings, except Osborne, the most rapacious and brutal of booksellers, who proclaimed everywhere that he had been knocked down by the huge fellow whom he had hired to puff the Harleian Library.

About a year after Johnson had begun to reside in London, he was fortunate enough to obtain regular employment from Cave, an enterprising and intelligent bookseller, who was proprietor and editor of the Gentleman's Magazine. That journal, just entering on the ninth year of its long existence, was the only periodical work in the kingdom which then had what would now be called a large circulation. It was, indeed, the chief source of parliamentary intelligence. It was not then safe, even during a recess, to publish an account of the proceedings of either

House without some disguise. Cave, however, ventured to entertain his readers with what he called Reports of the Debates of the Senate of Lilliput. France was Blefuscu; London was Mildendo; pounds were sprugs; the Duke of Newcastle was the Nardac Secretary of State; Lord Hardwicke was the Hurgo Hickrad; and William Pulteney was Wingul Pulnub. To write the speeches was, during several years, the business of Johnson. He was generally furnished with notes, meagre indeed, and inaccurate, of what had been said; but sometimes he had to find arguments and eloquence both for the ministry and for the opposition. He was himself a Tory, not from rational conviction, — for his serious opinion was that one form of government was just as good or as bad as another, — but from mere passion, such as inflamed the Capulets against the Montagues, or the Blues of the Roman circus against the Greens. In his infancy he had heard so much talk about the villianies of the Whigs, and the dangers of the Church, that he had become a furious partisan when he could scarcely speak. Before he was three he had insisted on being taken to hear Sacheverell preach at Lichfield Cathedral, and had listened to the sermon with as much respect, and probably with as much intelligence, as any Staffordshire squire in the congregation. The work which had been begun in the nursery had been completed by the university. Oxford, when Johnson resided there, was the most Jacobitical place in England; and Pembroke was one of the most Jacobitical colleges in Oxford. The prejudices which he brought up to London were scarcely less absurd than those of his own Tom Tempest. Charles the Second and James the Second were two of the best kings that ever reigned. Laud, a poor creature who never did, said, or wrote anything indicating more than the ordinary capacity of an old woman, was a prodigy of parts and learning over whose tomb Art and Genius still continued to weep. Hampden deserved no more honorable name than that of "the zealot of rebellion." Even the ship money, condemned not less decidedly by Falkland and Clarendon than by the bitterest Roundheads, Johnson would not pronounce to have been an unconstitutional impost. Under a government, the mildest that had ever been known in the world, — under a government which allowed to the people an unprecedented liberty of speech and action, — he fancied that he was a slave; he assailed the ministry with obloquy which refuted itself, and regretted the lost freedom and happiness of those golden days in which a writer who had taken but one tenth part of the license allowed to him would have been pilloried, mangled with the shears, whipped at the cart's tail, and flung into a noisome dungeon to die. He hated Dissenters and stockjobbers, the excise and the army, septennial Parliaments, and Continental connections. He long had an aversion to the Scotch, an aversion of which he could not remember the commencement, but which, he owned, had probably originated in his abhorrence of the conduct of the nation during the Great Rebellion. It is easy to guess in what manner debates on great party questions were likely to be reported by a man whose judgment was so much disordered by party spirit. A show of fairness was indeed necessary to the prosperity of the Magazine. But Johnson long afterwards owned that, though he had saved appearances, he had taken care that the Whig dogs should not have the best of it; and, in fact, every passage which has lived, every passage which bears the marks of his higher faculties, is put into the mouth of some member of the opposition.

A few weeks after Johnson had entered on these obscure labors, he published a work which at once placed him high among the writers of his age. It is probable that what he had suffered during his first year in London had often reminded him of some parts of that noble poem in which Juvenal had described the misery and degradation of a needy man of letters, lodged among the pigeons' nests in the tottering garrets which overhung the streets of Rome.

Pope's admirable imitations of Horace's Satires and Epistles had recently appeared, were in every hand, and were by many readers thought superior to the originals. What Pope had done for Horace, Johnson aspired to do for Juvenal. The enterprise was bold, and yet judicious. For between Johnson and Juvenal there was much in common, much more certainly than between Pope and Horace.

Johnson's London appeared without his name in May, 1738. He received only ten guineas for this stately and vigorous poem; but the sale was rapid, and the success complete. A second edition was required within a week. Those small critics who are always desirous to lower established reputations ran about proclaiming that the anonymous satirist was superior to Pope in Pope's own peculiar department of literature. It ought to be remembered, to the honor of Pope, that he joined heartily in the applause with which the appearance of a rival genius was welcomed. He made inquiries about the author of London. Such a man, he said, could not long be concealed. The name was soon discovered; and Pope, with great kindness, exerted himself to obtain an academical degree and the mastership of a grammar school for the poor young poet. The attempt failed; and Johnson remained a bookseller's hack.

It does not appear that these two men — the most eminent writer of the generation which was going out, and the most eminent writer of the generation which was coming in — ever saw each other. They lived in very different circles, one surrounded by dukes and earls, the other by starving pamphleteers and index-makers. Among Johnson's associates at this time may be mentioned Boyse, who, when his shirts were pledged, scrawled Latin verses sitting up in bed with his arms through two holes in his blanket; who composed very respectable sacred poetry when he was sober; and who was at last run over by a hackney coach when he was drunk; Hoole, surnamed the metaphysical tailor, who, instead of attending to his measures, used to trace geometrical diagrams on the board where he sat cross-legged; and the penitent impostor, George Psalmanazar, who, after poring all day, in a humble lodging, on the folios of Jewish rabbis and Christian fathers, indulged himself at night with literary and theological conversation at an alehouse in the city. But the most remarkable of the persons with whom at this time Johnson consorted was Richard Savage, an earl's son, a shoemaker's apprentice, who had seen life in all its forms, who had feasted among blue ribbons in St. James's Square, and had lain with fifty pounds' weight of irons on his legs in the condemned ward of Newgate. This man had, after many vicissitudes of fortune, sunk at last into abject and hopeless poverty. His pen had failed him. His patrons had been taken away by death, or estranged by the riotous profusion with which he squandered their bounty, and the ungrateful insolence with which he rejected their advice. He now lived by begging. He dined on venison and champagne whenever he had been so fortunate as to borrow a guinea. If his questing had been unsuccessful, he appeased the rage of hunger with some scraps of broken meat, and lay down to rest under the Piazza of Covent Garden in warm weather, and, in cold weather, as near as he could get to the furnace of a glass house. Yet, in his misery, he was still an agreeable companion. He had an inexhaustible store of anecdotes about that gay and brilliant world from which he was now an outcast. He had observed the great men of both parties in hours of careless relaxation, had seen the leaders of opposition without the masque of patriotism, and had heard the prime minister roar with laughter and tell stories not over decent. During some months Savage lived in the closest familiarity with Johnson; and then the friends parted, not without tears. Johnson remained in London to drudge for Cave. Savage went to the west of England, lived there as he had lived everywhere, and, in 1743, died, penniless and heart-broken, in Bristol jail.

Soon after his death, while the public curiosity was strongly excited about his extraordinary character, and his not less extraordinary adventures, a Life of him appeared widely different from the catch-penny Lives of eminent men which were then a staple article of manufacture in Grub Street. The style was indeed deficient in ease and variety; and the writer was evidently too partial to the Latin element of our language. But the little work, with all its faults, was a masterpiece. No finer specimen of literary biography existed in any language, living or dead; and a discerning critic might have confidently predicted that the author was destined to be the founder of a new school of English eloquence.

The Life of Savage was anonymous; but it was well known in literary circles that Johnson was the writer. During the three years which followed, he produced no important work; but he was not, and indeed could not be, idle. The fame of his abilities and learning continued to grow. Warburton pronounced him a man of parts and genius; and the praise of Warburton was then no light thing. Such was Johnson's reputation that, in 1747, several eminent booksellers combined to employ him in the arduous work of preparing a Dictionary of the English Language, in two folio volumes. The sum which they agreed to pay him was only fifteen hundred guineas; and out of this sum he had to pay several poor men of letters who assisted him in the humbler parts of his task.

The prospectus of the Dictionary he addressed to the Earl of Chesterfield. Chesterfield had long been celebrated for the politeness of his manners, the brilliancy of his wit, and the delicacy of his taste. He was acknowledged to be the finest speaker in the House of Lords. He had recently governed Ireland, at a momentous conjuncture, with eminent firmness, wisdom, and humanity; and he had since become Secretary of State. He received Johnson's homage with the most winning affability, and requited it with a few guineas, bestowed doubtless in a very graceful manner, but was by no means desirous to see all his carpets blackened with the London mud, and his soups and wines thrown to right and left over the gowns of fine ladies and the waistcoats of fine gentlemen, by an absent, awkward scholar, who gave strange starts and uttered strange growls, who dressed like a scarecrow, and ate like a cormorant. During some time Johnson continued to call on his patron, but, after being repeatedly told by the porter that his lordship was not at home, took the hint, and ceased to present himself at the inhospitable door.

Johnson had flattered himself that he should have completed his Dictionary by the end of 1750; but it was not till 1755 that he at length gave his huge volumes to the world. During the seven years which he passed in the drudgery of penning definitions and marking quotations for transcription, he sought for relaxation in literary labor of a more agreeable kind. In 1749 he published the Vanity of Human Wishes, an excellent imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal. It is in truth not easy to say whether the palm belongs to the ancient or to the modern poet. The couplets in which the fall of Wolsey is described, though lofty and sonorous, are feeble when compared with the wonderful lines which bring before us all Rome in tumult on the day of the fall of Sejanus, the laurels on the doorposts, the white bull stalking towards the Capitol, the statues rolling down from their pedestals, the flatterers of the disgraced minister running to see him dragged with a hook through the streets, and to have a kick at his carcase before it is hurled into the Tiber. It must be owned, too, that in the concluding passage the Christian moralist has not made the most of his advantages, and has fallen decidedly short of the sublimity of his Pagan model. On the other hand, Juvenal's Hannibal must yield to Johnson's Charles; and Johnson's vigorous and pathetic enumeration of the miseries of a literary life must be allowed to be superior to Juvenal's lamentation over the fate of Demosthenes and Cicero.

For the copyright of the Vanity of Human Wishes Johnson received only fifteen guineas.

A few days after the publication of this poem, his tragedy, begun many years before, was brought on the stage. His pupil, David Garrick, had, in 1741, made his appearance on a humble stage in Goodman's Fields, had at once risen to the first place among actors, and was now, after several years of almost uninterrupted success, manager of Drury Lane Theatre. The relation between him and his old preceptor was of a very singular kind. They repelled each other strongly, and yet attracted each other strongly. Nature had made them of very different clay; and circumstances had fully brought out the natural peculiarities of both. Sudden prosperity had turned Garrick's head. Continued adversity had soured Johnson's temper. Johnson saw with more envy than became so great a man the villa, the plate, the china, the Brussels carpet, which the little mimic had got by repeating, with grimaces and gesticulations, what wiser men had written; and the exquisitely sensitive vanity of Garrick was galled by the thought that, while all the rest of the world was applauding him, he could obtain from one morose cynic, whose opinion it was impossible to despise, scarcely any compliment not acidulated with scorn. Yet the two Lichfield men had so many early recollections in common, and sympathized with each other on so many points on which they sympathized with nobody else in the vast population of the capital, that, though the master was often provoked by the monkey-like impertinence of the pupil, and the pupil by the bearish rudeness of the master, they remained friends till they were parted by death. Garrick now brought Irene out, with alterations sufficient to displease the author, yet not sufficient to make the piece pleasing to the audience. The public, however, listened with little emotion, but with much civility, to five acts of monotonous declamation. After nine representations the play was withdrawn. It is, indeed, altogether unsuited to the stage, and, even when perused in the closet, will be found hardly worthy of the author. He had not the slightest notion of what blank verse should be. A change in the last syllable of every other line would make the versification of the Vanity of Human Wishes closely resemble the versification of Irene. The poet, however, cleared by his benefit nights, and by the sale of the copyright of his tragedy, about three hundred pounds, then a great sum in his estimation.

About a year after the representation of Irene, he began to publish a series of short essays on morals, manners, and literature. This species of composition had been brought into fashion by the success of the Tatler, and by the still more brilliant success of the Spectator. A crowd of small writers had vainly attempted to rival Addison. The Lay Monastery, the Censor, the Freethinker, the Plain Dealer, the Champion, and other works of the same kind, had had their short day. None of them had obtained a permanent place in our literature; and they are now to be found only in the libraries of the curious. At length Johnson undertook the adventure in which so many aspirants had failed. In the thirty-sixth year after the appearance of the last number of the Spectator, appeared the first number of the Rambler. From March, 1750, to March, 1752, this paper continued to come out every Tuesday and Saturday.

From the first the Rambler was enthusiastically admired by a few eminent men. Richardson, when only five numbers had appeared, pronounced it equal, if not superior, to the Spectator. Young and Hartley expressed their approbation not less warmly. Bubb Dodington, among whose many faults indifference to the claims of genius and learning cannot be reckoned, solicited the acquaintance of the writer. In consequence probably of the good offices of Dodington, who was then the confidential adviser of Prince Frederic, two of his Royal Highness's gentlemen carried a gracious message to the printing office, and ordered seven copies for Leicester House. But these overtures seem to have been very coldly received. Johnson had had enough of the patronage of the great to last him all his life, and was not disposed to haunt any other door as he had haunted the door of Chesterfield.

By the public the Rambler was at first very coldly received. Though the price of a number was only twopence, the sale did not amount to five hundred. The profits were therefore very small. But as soon as the flying leaves were collected and reprinted they became popular. The author lived to see thirteen thousand copies spread over England alone. Separate editions were published for the Scotch and Irish markets. A large party pronounced the style perfect, so absolutely perfect that in some essays it would be impossible for the writer himself to alter a single word for the better. Another party, not less numerous, vehemently accused him of having corrupted the purity of the English tongue. The best critics admitted that his diction was too monotonous, too obviously artificial, and now and then turgid even to absurdity. But they did justice to the acuteness of his observations on morals and manners, to the constant precision and frequent brilliancy of his language, to the weighty and magnificent eloquence of many serious passages, and to the solemn yet pleasing humor of some of the lighter papers. On the question of precedence between Addison and Johnson, a question which, seventy years ago, was much disputed, posterity has pronounced a decision from which there is no appeal. Sir Roger, his chaplain and his butler, Will Wimble and Will Honeycomb, the Vision of Mirza, the Journal of the Retired Citizen, the Everlasting Club, the Dunmow Flitch, the Loves of Hilpah and Shalum, the Visit to the Exchange, and the Visit to the Abbey, are known to everybody. But many men and women, even of highly cultivated minds, are unacquainted with Squire Bluster and Mrs. Busy, Quisquilius and Venustulus, the Allegory of Wit and Learning, the Chronicle of the Revolutions of a Garret, and the sad fate of Aningait and Ajut.

The last Rambler was written in a sad and gloomy hour. Mrs. Johnson had been given over by the physicians. Three days later she died. She left her husband almost broken-hearted. Many people had been surprised to see a man of his genius and learning stooping to every drudgery, and denying himself almost every comfort, for the purpose of supplying a silly, affected old woman with superfluities, which she accepted with but little gratitude. But all his affection had been concentrated on her. He had neither brother nor sister, neither son nor daughter. To him she was beautiful as the Gunnings, and witty as Lady Mary. Her opinion of his writings was more important to him than the voice of the pit of Drury Lane Theatre or the judgment of the Monthly Review. The chief support which had sustained him through the most arduous labor of his life was the hope that she would enjoy the fame and the profit which he anticipated from his Dictionary. She was gone; and in that vast labyrinth of streets, peopled by eight hundred thousand human beings, he was alone. Yet it was necessary for him to set himself, as he expressed it, doggedly to work. After three more laborious years, the Dictionary was at length complete.

It had been generally supposed that this great work would be dedicated to the eloquent and accomplished nobleman to whom the prospectus had been addressed. He well knew the value of such a compliment; and therefore, when the day of publication drew near, he exerted himself to soothe, by a show of zealous and at the same time of delicate and judicious kindness, the pride which he had so cruelly wounded. Since the Ramblers had ceased to appear, the town had been entertained by a journal called The World, to which many men of high rank and fashion contributed. In two successive numbers of The World the Dictionary was, to use the modern phrase, puffed with wonderful skill. The writings of Johnson were warmly praised. It was proposed that he should be invested with the authority of a Dictator, nay, of a Pope, over our language, and that his decisions about the meaning and the spelling of words should be received as final. His two folios, it was said, would of course be bought by everybody who could afford to buy them. It was soon known that these papers were written by Chesterfield. But the just resentment of Johnson was not to be so appeased. In a letter written with singular energy and dignity of thought and language, he repelled the tardy advances of his patron. The Dictionary came forth without a dedication. In the preface the author truly declared that he owed nothing to the great, and described the difficulties with which he had been left to struggle so forcibly and pathetically that the ablest and most malevolent of all the enemies of his fame, Horne Tooke, never could read that passage without tears.

The public, on this occasion, did Johnson full justice, and something more than justice. The best lexicographer may well be content if his productions are received by the world with cold esteem. But Johnson's Dictionary was hailed with an enthusiasm such as no similar work has ever excited. It was indeed the first dictionary which could be read with pleasure. The definitions show so much acuteness of thought and command of language, and the passages quoted from poets, divines, and philosophers are so skilfully selected, that a leisure hour may always be very agreeably spent in turning over the pages. The faults of the book resolve themselves, for the most part, into one great fault. Johnson was a wretched etymologist. He knew little or nothing of any Teutonic language except English, which indeed, as he wrote it, was scarcely a Teutonic language; and thus he was absolutely at the mercy of Junius and Skinner.

The Dictionary, though it raised Johnson's fame, added nothing to his pecuniary means. The fifteen hundred guineas which the booksellers had agreed to pay him had been advanced and spent before the last sheets issued from the press. It is painful to relate that, twice in the course of the year which followed the publication of this great work, he was arrested and carried to sponging houses, and that he was twice indebted for his liberty to his excellent friend Richardson. It was still necessary for the man who had been formally saluted by the highest authority as Dictator of the English language to supply his wants by constant toil. He abridged his Dictionary. He proposed to bring out an edition of Shakespeare by subscription; and many subscribers sent in their names, and laid down their money; but he soon found the task so little to his taste that he turned to more attractive employments. He contributed many papers to a new monthly journal, which was called the Literary Magazine. Few of these papers have much interest; but among them was the very best thing that he ever wrote, a masterpiece both of reasoning and of satirical pleasantry, the review of Jenyns's Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil.

In the spring of 1758 Johnson put forth the first of a series of essays, entitled The Idler. During two years these essays continued to appear weekly. They were eagerly read, widely circulated, and, indeed, impudently pirated, while they were still in the original form, and had a large sale when collected into volumes. The Idler may be described as a second part of the Rambler, somewhat livelier and somewhat weaker than the first part.

While Johnson was busied with his Idlers, his mother, who had accomplished her ninetieth year, died at Lichfield. It was long since he had seen her; but he had not failed to contribute largely, out of his small means, to her comfort. In order to defray the charges of her funeral, and to pay some debts which she had left, he wrote a little book in a single week, and sent off the sheets to the press without reading them over. A hundred pounds were paid him for the copyright; and the purchasers had great cause to be pleased with their bargain, for the book was Rasselas.

The success of Rasselas was great, though such ladies as Miss Lydia Languish must have been grievously disappointed when they found that the new volume from the circulating library was little more than a dissertation on the author's favorite theme, the Vanity of Human Wishes; that the Prince of Abyssinia was without a mistress, and the Princess without a lover; and that the story set the hero and the heroine down exactly where it had taken them up. The style was the subject of much eager controversy. The Monthly Review and the Critical Review took different sides. Many readers pronounced the writer a pompous pedant, who would never use a word of two syllables where it was possible to use a word of six, and who could not make a waiting woman relate her adventures without balancing every noun with another noun, and every epithet with another epithet. Another party, not less zealous, cited with delight numerous passages in which weighty meaning was expressed with accuracy and illustrated with splendor. And both the censure and the praise were merited.

About the plan of Rasselas little was said by the critics; and yet the faults of the plan might seem to invite severe criticism. Johnson has frequently blamed Shakespeare for neglecting the proprieties of time and place, and for ascribing to one age or nation the manners and opinions of another. Yet Shakespeare has not sinned in this way more grievously than Johnson. Rasselas and Imlac, Nekayah and Pekuah, are evidently meant to be Abyssinians of the eighteenth century, for the Europe which Imlac describes is the Europe of the eighteenth century; and the inmates of the Happy Valley talk familiarly of that law of gravitation which Newton discovered, and which was not fully received even at Cambridge till the eighteenth century. What a real company of Abyssinians would have been may be learned from Bruce's Travels. But Johnson, not content with turning filthy savages, ignorant of their letters, and gorged with raw steaks cut from living cows, into philosophers as eloquent and enlightened as himself or his friend Burke, and into ladies as highly accomplished as Mrs. Lennox or Mrs. Sheridan, transferred the whole domestic system of England to Egypt. Into a land of harems, a land of polygamy, a land where women are married without ever being seen, he introduced the flirtations and jealousies of our ballrooms. In a land where there is boundless liberty of divorce, wedlock is described as the indissoluble compact. "A youth and maiden meeting by chance, or brought together by artifice, exchange glances, reciprocate civilities, go home, and dream of each other. Such," says Rasselas, "is the common process of marriage." Such it may have been, and may still be, in London, but assuredly not at Cairo. A writer who was guilty of such improprieties had little right to blame the poet who made Hector quote Aristotle, and represented Julio Romano as flourishing in the days of the oracle of Delphi.

By such exertions as have been described, Johnson supported himself till the year 1762. In that year a great change in his circumstances took place. He had from a child been an enemy of the reigning dynasty. His Jacobite prejudices had been exhibited with little disguise both in his works and in his conversation. Even in his massy and elaborate Dictionary, he had, with a strange want of taste and judgment, inserted bitter and contumelious reflections on the Whig party. The excise, which was a favorite resource of Whig financiers, he had designated as a hateful tax. He had railed against the commissioners of excise in language so coarse that they had seriously thought of prosecuting him. He had with difficulty been prevented from holding up the Lord Privy Seal by name as an example of the meaning of the word "renegade." A pension he had defined as pay given to a state hireling to betray his country; a pensioner as a slave of state hired by a stipend to obey a master. It seemed unlikely that the author of these definitions would himself be pensioned. But that was a time of wonders. George the Third had ascended the throne; and had, in the course of a few months, disgusted many of the old friends and conciliated many of the old enemies of his house. The city was becoming mutinous. Oxford was becoming loyal. Cavendishes and Bentincks were murmuring. Somersets and Wyndhams were hastening to kiss hands. The head of the treasury was now Lord Bute, who was a Tory, and could have no objection to Johnson's Toryism. Bute wished to be thought a patron of men of letters; and Johnson was one of the most eminent and one of the most needy men of letters in Europe. A pension of three hundred a year was graciously offered, and with very little hesitation accepted.

This event produced a change in Johnson's whole way of life. For the first time since his boyhood he no longer felt the daily goad urging him to the daily toil. He was at liberty, after thirty years of anxiety and drudgery, to indulge his constitutional indolence, to lie in bed till two in the afternoon, and to sit up talking till four in the morning, without fearing either the printer's devil or the sheriff's officer.

One laborious task indeed he had bound himself to perform. He had received large subscriptions for his promised edition of Shakespeare; he had lived on those subscriptions during some years; and he could not without disgrace omit to perform his part of the contract. His friends repeatedly exhorted him to make an effort; and he repeatedly resolved to do so. But, notwithstanding their exhortations and his resolutions, month followed month, year followed year, and nothing was done. He prayed fervently against his idleness; he determined, as often as he received the sacrament, that he would no longer doze away and trifle away his time; but the spell under which he lay resisted prayer and sacrament. His private notes at this time are made up of self-reproaches. "My indolence," he wrote on Easter Eve in 1764, "has sunk into grosser sluggishness. A kind of strange oblivion has overspread me, so that I know not what has become of the last year." Easter, 1765, came, and found him still in the same state. "My time," he wrote, "has been unprofitably spent, and seems as a dream that has left nothing behind. My memory grows confused, and I know not how the days pass over me." Happily for his honor, the charm which held him captive was at length broken by no gentle or friendly hand. He had been weak enough to pay serious attention to a story about a ghost which haunted a house in Cock Lane, and had actually gone himself, with some of his friends, at one in the morning, to St. John's Church, Clerkenwell, in the hope of receiving a communication from the perturbed spirit. But the spirit, though adjured with all solemnity, remained obstinately silent; and it soon appeared that a naughty girl of eleven had been amusing herself by making fools of so many philosophers. Churchill, who, confident in his powers, drunk with popularity, and burning with party spirit, was looking for some man of established fame and Tory politics to insult, celebrated the Cock Lane Ghost in three cantos, nicknamed Johnson Pomposo, asked where the book was which had been so long promised and so liberally paid for, and directly accused the great moralist of cheating. This terrible word proved effectual; and in October, 1765, appeared, after a delay of nine years, the new edition of Shakespeare.

This publication saved Johnson's character for honesty, but added nothing to the fame of his abilities and learning. The preface, though it contains some good passages, is not in his best manner. The most valuable notes are those in which he had an opportunity of showing how attentively he had during many years observed human life and human nature. The best specimen is the note on the character of Polonius. Nothing so good is to be found even in Wilhelm Meister's admirable examination of Hamlet. But here praise must end. It would be difficult to name a more slovenly, a more worthless, edition of any great classic. The reader may turn over play after play without finding one happy conjectural emendation, or one ingenious and satisfactory explanation of a passage which had baffled preceding commentators. Johnson had, in his prospectus, told the world that he was peculiarly fitted for the task which he had undertaken, because he had, as a lexicographer, been under the necessity of taking a wider view of the English language than any of his predecessors. That his knowledge of our literature was extensive is indisputable. But, unfortunately, he had altogether neglected that very part of our literature with which it is especially desirable that an editor of Shakespeare should be conversant. It is dangerous to assert a negative. Yet little will be risked by the assertion, that in the two folio volumes of the English Dictionary there is not a single passage quoted from any dramatist of the Elizabethan age except Shakespeare and Ben. Even from Ben the quotations are few. Johnson might easily, in a few months, have made himself well acquainted with every old play that was extant. But it never seems to have occurred to him that this was a necessary preparation for the work which he had undertaken. He would doubtless have admitted that it would be the height of absurdity in a man who was not familiar with the works of Æschylus and Euripides to publish an edition of Sophocles. Yet he ventured to publish an edition of Shakespeare, without having ever in his life, as far as can be discovered, read a single scene of Massinger, Ford, Decker, Webster, Marlowe, Beaumont, or Fletcher. His detractors were noisy and scurrilous. Those who most loved and honored him had little to say in praise of the manner in which he had discharged the duty of a commentator. He had, however, acquitted himself of a debt which had long lain heavy on his conscience; and he sank back into the repose from which the sting of satire had roused him. He long continued to live upon the fame which he had already won. He was honored by the University of Oxford with a Doctor's degree, by the Royal Academy with a professorship, and by the King with an interview, in which his Majesty most graciously expressed a hope that so excellent a writer would not cease to write. In the interval, however, between 1765 and 1775 Johnson published only two or three political tracts, the longest of which he could have produced in forty-eight hours, if he had worked as he worked on the Life of Savage and on Rasselas.

But, though his pen was now idle, his tongue was active. The influence exercised by his conversation, directly upon those with whom he lived, and indirectly on the whole literary world, was altogether without a parallel. His colloquial talents were indeed of the highest order. He had strong sense, quick discernment, wit, humor, immense knowledge of literature and of life, and an infinite store of curious anecdotes. As respected style, he spoke far better than he wrote. Every sentence which dropped from his lips was as correct in structure as the most nicely balanced period of the Rambler. But in his talk there were no pompous triads, and little more than a fair proportion of words in *osity* and *ation.* All was simplicity, ease, and vigor. He uttered his short, weighty, and pointed sentences with a power of voice, and a justness and energy of emphasis, of which the effect was rather increased than diminished by the rollings of his huge form, and by the asthmatic gaspings and puffings in which the peals of his eloquence generally ended. Nor did the laziness which made him unwilling to sit down to his desk prevent him from giving instruction or entertainment orally. To discuss questions of taste, of learning, of casuistry, in language so exact and so forcible that it might have been printed without the alteration of a word, was to him no exertion, but a pleasure. He loved, as he said, to fold his legs and have his talk out. He was ready to bestow the overflowings of his full mind on anybody who would start a subject, on a fellow passenger in a stagecoach, or on the person who sat at the same table with him in an eating house. But his conversation was nowhere so brilliant and striking as when he was surrounded by a few friends, whose abilities and knowledge enabled them, as he once expressed it, to send him back every ball that he threw. Some of these, in 1764, formed themselves into a club, which gradually became a formidable power in the commonwealth of letters. The verdicts pronounced by this conclave on new books were speedily known over all London, and were sufficient to sell off a whole edition in a day, or to condemn the sheets to the service of the trunk-maker and the pastry-cook. Nor shall we think this strange when we consider what great and various talents and acquirements met in the little fraternity. Goldsmith was the representative of poetry and light literature, Reynolds of the arts, Burke of political eloquence and political philosophy. There, too, were Gibbon, the greatest historian, and Jones, the greatest linguist, of the age. Garrick brought to the meetings his inexhaustible pleasantry, his incomparable mimicry, and his consummate knowledge of stage effect. Among the most constant attendants were two high-born and high-bred gentlemen, closely bound together by friendship, but of widely different characters and habits: Bennet Langton, distinguished by his skill in Greek literature, by the orthodoxy of his opinions, and by the sanctity of his life; and Topham Beauclerk, renowned for his amours, his knowledge of the gay world, his fastidious taste, and his sarcastic wit. To predominate over such a society was not easy. Yet even over such a society Johnson predominated. Burke might indeed have disputed the supremacy to which others were under the necessity of submitting. But Burke, though not generally a very patient listener, was content to take the second part when Johnson was present; and the club itself, consisting of so many eminent men, is to this day popularly designated as Johnson's Club.

Among the members of this celebrated body was one to whom it has owed the greater part of its celebrity, yet who was regarded with little respect by his brethren, and had not without difficulty obtained a seat among them. This was James Boswell, a young Scotch lawyer, heir to an honorable name and a fair estate. That he was a coxcomb and a bore, weak, vain, pushing, curious, garrulous, was obvious to all who were acquainted with him. That he could not reason, that he had no wit, no humor, no eloquence, is apparent from his writings. And yet his writings are read beyond the Mississippi, and under the Southern Cross, and are likely to be read as long as the English tongue exists, either as a living or as a dead language. Nature had made him a slave and an idolater. His mind resembled those creepers which the botanists call parasites, and which can subsist only by clinging round the stems and imbibing the juices of stronger plants. He must have fastened himself on somebody. He might have fastened himself on Wilkes, and have become the fiercest patriot in the Bill of Rights Society. He might have fastened himself on Whitfield, and have become the loudest field preacher among the Calvinistic Methodists. In a happy hour he fastened himself on Johnson. The pair might seem ill matched. For Johnson had early been prejudiced against Boswell's country. To a man of Johnson's strong understanding and irritable temper, the silly egotism and adulation of Boswell must have been as teasing as the constant buzz of a fly. Johnson hated to be questioned: and Boswell was eternally catechising him on all kinds of subjects, and sometimes propounded such questions as, "What would you do, sir, if you were locked up in a tower with a baby?" Johnson was a water-drinker; and Boswell was a wine-bibber, and indeed little better than a habitual sot. It was impossible that there should be perfect harmony between two such companions. Indeed, the great man was sometimes provoked into fits of passion in which he said things which the small man, during a few hours, seriously resented. Every quarrel, however, was soon made up. During twenty years the disciple continued to worship the master; the master continued to scold the disciple, to sneer at him, and to love him. The two friends ordinarily resided at a great distance from each other. Boswell practised in the Parliament House of Edinburgh, and could pay only occasional visits to London. During those visits his chief business was to watch Johnson, to discover all Johnson's habits, to turn the conversation to subjects about which Johnson was likely to say something remarkable, and to fill quarto notebooks with minutes of what Johnson had said. In this way were gathered the materials out of which was afterwards constructed the most interesting biographical work in the world.

Soon after the club began to exist, Johnson formed a connection less important indeed to his fame, but much more important to his happiness, than his connection with Boswell. Henry Thrale, one of the most opulent brewers in the kingdom, a man of sound and cultivated understanding, rigid principles, and liberal spirit, was married to one of those clever, kind-hearted, engaging, vain, pert young women, who are perpetually doing or saying what is not exactly right, but who, do or say what they may, are always agreeable. In 1765 the Thrales became acquainted with Johnson; and the acquaintance ripened fast into friendship. They were astonished and delighted by the brilliancy of his conversation. They were flattered by finding that a man so widely celebrated preferred their house to any other in London. Even the peculiarities which seemed to unfit him for civilized society — his gesticulations, his rollings, his puffings, his mutterings, the strange way in which he put on his clothes, the ravenous eagerness with which he devoured his dinner, his fits of melancholy, his fits of anger, his frequent rudeness, his occasional ferocity — increased the interest which his new associates took in him. For these things were the cruel marks left behind by a life which had been one long conflict with disease and with adversity. In a vulgar hack writer such oddities would have excited only disgust. But in a man of genius, learning, and virtue their effect was to add pity to admiration and esteem. Johnson soon had an apartment at the brewery in Southwark, and a still more pleasant apartment at the villa of his friends on Streatham Common. A large part of every year he passed in those abodes, — abodes which must have seemed magnificent and luxurious indeed, when compared with the dens in which he had generally been lodged. But his chief pleasures were derived from what the astronomer of his Abyssinian tale called "the endearing elegance of female friendship." Mrs. Thrale rallied him, soothed him, coaxed him, and, if she sometimes provoked him by her flippancy, made ample amends by listening to his reproofs with angelic sweetness of temper. When he was diseased in body and in mind, she was the most tender of nurses. No comfort that wealth could purchase, no contrivance that womanly ingenuity, set to work by womanly compassion, could devise, was wanting to his sickroom. He requited her kindness by an affection pure as the affection of a father, yet delicately tinged with a gallantry which, though awkward, must have been more flattering than the attentions of a crowd of the fools who gloried in the names, now obsolete, of Buck and Maccaroni. It should seem that a full half of Johnson's life, during about sixteen years, was passed under the roof of the Thrales. He accompanied the family sometimes to Bath, and sometimes to Brighton, once to Wales, and once to Paris. But he had at the same time a house in one of the narrow and gloomy courts on the north of Fleet Street. In the garrets was his library, a large and miscellaneous collection of books, falling to pieces and begrimed with dust. On a lower floor he sometimes, but very rarely, regaled a friend with a plain dinner, a veal pie, or a leg of lamb and spinage, and a rice pudding. Nor was the dwelling uninhabited during his long absences. It was the home of the most extraordinary assemblage of inmates that ever was brought together. At the head of the establishment Johnson had placed an old lady named Williams, whose chief recommendations were her blindness and her poverty. But, in spite of her murmurs and reproaches, he gave an asylum to another lady who was as poor as herself, Mrs. Desmoulins, whose family he had known many years before in Staffordshire. Room was found for the daughter of Mrs. Desmoulins, and for another destitute damsel, who was generally addressed as Miss Carmichael, but whom her generous host called Polly. An old quack doctor named Levett, who bled and dosed coal heavers and hackney coachmen, and received for fees crusts of bread, bits of bacon, glasses of gin, and sometimes a little copper, completed this strange menagerie. All these poor creatures were at constant war with each other, and with Johnson's negro servant Frank. Sometimes, indeed, they transferred their hostilities from the servant to the master, complained that a better table was not kept for them, and railed or maundered till their benefactor was glad to make his escape to Streatham, or to the Mitre Tavern. And yet he who was generally the haughtiest and most irritable of mankind, who was but too prompt to resent anything which looked like a slight on the part of a purse-proud bookseller or of a noble and powerful patron, bore patiently from mendicants, who but for his bounty must have gone to the workhouse, insults more provoking than those for which he had knocked down Osborne and bidden defiance to Chesterfield. Year after year Mrs. Williams and Mrs.

Desmoulins, Polly and Levett, continued to torment him and to live upon him.

The course of life which has been described was interrupted in Johnson's sixty-fourth year by an important event. He had early read an account of the Hebrides, and had been much interested by learning that there was so near him a land peopled by a race which was still as rude and simple as in the middle ages. A wish to become intimately acquainted with a state of society so utterly unlike all that he had ever seen frequently crossed his mind. But it is not probable that his curiosity would have overcome his habitual sluggishness, and his love of the smoke, the mud, and the cries of London, had not Boswell importuned him to attempt the adventure, and offered to be his squire. At length, in August, 1773, Johnson crossed the Highland line, and plunged courageously into what was then considered, by most Englishmen, as a dreary and perilous wilderness. After wandering about two months through the Celtic region, sometimes in rude boats which did not protect him from the rain, and sometimes on small shaggy ponies which could hardly bear his weight, he returned to his old haunts with a mind full of new images and new theories. During the following year he employed himself in recording his adventures. About the beginning of 1775 his Journey to the Hebrides was published, and was, during some weeks, the chief subject of conversation in all circles in which any attention was paid to literature. The book is still read with pleasure. The narrative is entertaining; the speculations, whether sound or unsound, are always ingenious; and the style, though too stiff and pompous, is somewhat easier and more graceful than that of his early writings. His prejudice against the Scotch had at length become little more than matter of jest; and whatever remained of the old feeling had been effectually removed by the kind and respectful hospitality with which he had been received in every part of Scotland. It was, of course, not to be expected that an Oxonian Tory should praise the Presbyterian polity and ritual, or that an eye accustomed to the hedgerows and parks of England should not be struck by the bareness of Berwickshire and East Lothian. But even in censure Johnson's tone is not unfriendly. The most enlightened Scotchmen, with Lord Mansfield at their head, were well pleased. But some foolish and ignorant Scotchmen were moved to anger by a little unpalatable truth which was mingled with much eulogy, and assailed him whom they chose to consider as the enemy of their country with libels much more dishonorable to their country than anything that he had ever said or written. They published paragraphs in the newspapers, articles in the magazines, sixpenny pamphlets, five-shilling books. One scribbler abused Johnson for being blear-eyed; another for being a pensioner; a third informed the world that one of the Doctor's uncles had been convicted of felony in Scotland, and had found that there was in that country one tree capable of supporting the weight of an Englishman. Macpherson, whose Fingal had been proved in the Journey to be an impudent forgery, threatened to take vengeance with a cane. The only effect of this threat was that Johnson reiterated the charge of forgery in the most contemptuous terms, and walked about, during some time, with a cudgel, which, if the impostor had not been too wise to encounter it, would assuredly have descended upon him, to borrow the sublime language of his own epic poem, "like a hammer on the red son of the furnace."

Of other assailants Johnson took no notice whatever. He had early resolved never to be drawn into a controversy; and he adhered to his resolution with a steadfastness which is the more extraordinary because he was, both intellectually and morally, of the stuff of which controversialists are made. In conversation, he was a singularly eager, acute, and pertinacious disputant. When at a loss for good reasons, he had recourse to sophistry;

and, when heated by altercation, he made unsparing use of sarcasm and invective. But, when he took his pen in his hand, his whole character seemed to be changed. A hundred bad writers misrepresented him and reviled him; but not one of the hundred could boast of having been thought by him worthy of a refutation, or even of a retort. The Kenricks, Campbells, MacNicols, and Hendersons, did their best to annoy him, in the hope that he would give them importance by answering them. But the reader will in vain search his works for any allusion to Kenrick or Campbell, to MacNicol or Henderson. One Scotchman, bent on vindicating the fame of Scotch learning, defied him to the combat in a detestable Latin hexameter: —

> "Maxime, si tu vis, cupio contendere tecum."

But Johnson took no notice of the challenge. He had learned, both from his own observation and from literary history, in which he was deeply read, that the place of books in the public estimation is fixed, not by what is written about them, but by what is written in them; and that an author whose works are likely to live is very unwise if he stoops to wrangle with detractors whose works are certain to die. He always maintained that fame was a shuttlecock which could be kept up only by being beaten back, as well as beaten forward, and which would soon fall if there were only one battledore. No saying was oftener in his mouth than that fine apothegm of Bentley, that no man was ever written down but by himself.

Unhappily, a few months after the appearance of the Journey to the Hebrides, Johnson did what none of his envious assailants could have done, and to a certain extent succeeded in writing himself down. The disputes between England and her American colonies had reached a point at which no amicable adjustment was possible. Civil war was evidently impending; and the ministers seem to have thought that the eloquence of Johnson might with advantage be employed to inflame the nation against the opposition here, and against the rebels beyond the Atlantic. He had already written two or three tracts in defence of the foreign and domestic policy of the government; and those tracts, though hardly worthy of him, were much superior to the crowd of pamphlets which lay on the counters of Almon and Stockdale. But his Taxation No Tyranny was a pitiable failure. The very title was a silly phrase, which can have been recommended to his choice by nothing but a jingling alliteration which he ought to have despised. The arguments were such as boys use in debating societies. The pleasantry was as awkward as the gambols of a hippopotamus. Even Boswell was forced to own that, in this unfortunate piece, he could detect no trace of his master's powers. The general opinion was that the strong faculties which had produced the Dictionary and the Rambler were beginning to feel the effect of time and of disease, and that the old man would best consult his credit by writing no more.

But this was a great mistake. Johnson had failed, not because his mind was less vigorous than when he wrote Rasselas in the evenings of a week, but because he had foolishly chosen, or suffered others to choose for him, a subject such as he would at no time have been competent to treat. He was in no sense a statesman. He never willingly read or thought or talked about affairs of state. He loved biography, literary history, the history of manners; but political history was positively distasteful to him. The question at issue between the colonies and the mother country was a question about which he had really nothing to say. He failed, therefore, as the greatest men must fail when they attempt to do that for which they are unfit; as Burke would have failed if Burke had tried to write comedies like those of Sheridan; as Reynolds would have failed if Reynolds had tried to paint landscapes like those of Wilson. Happily, Johnson soon had an opportunity of proving most signally that his failure was not to be ascribed to intellectual decay.

On Easter Eve, 1777, some persons, deputed by a meeting which consisted of forty of the first booksellers in London, called upon him. Though he had some scruples about doing business at that season, he received his visitors with much civility. They came to inform him that a new edition of the English poets, from Cowley downwards, was in contemplation, and to ask him to furnish short biographical prefaces. He readily undertook the task, — a task for which he was preëminently qualified. His knowledge of the literary history of England since the Restoration was unrivalled. That knowledge he had derived partly from books, and partly from sources which had long been closed; from old Grub Street traditions; from the talk of forgotten poetasters and pamphleteers who had long been lying in parish vaults; from the recollections of such men as Gilbert Walmesley, who had conversed with the wits of Button; Cibber, who had mutilated the plays of two generations of dramatists; Orrery, who had been admitted to the society of Swift; and Savage, who had rendered services of no very honorable kind to Pope. The biographer therefore sat down to his task with a mind full of matter. He had at first intended to give only a paragraph to every minor poet, and only four or five pages to the greatest name. But the flood of anecdote and criticism overflowed the narrow channel. The work, which was originally meant to consist only of a few sheets, swelled into ten volumes, small volumes, it is true, and not closely printed. The first four appeared in 1779, the remaining six in 1781.

The Lives of the Poets are, on the whole, the best of Johnson's works. The narratives are as entertaining as any novel. The remarks on life and on human nature are eminently shrewd and profound. The criticisms are often excellent, and, even when grossly and provokingly unjust, well deserve to be studied. For, however erroneous they may be, they are never silly. They are the judgments of a mind trammelled by prejudice and deficient in sensibility, but vigorous and acute. They therefore generally contain a portion of valuable truth which deserves to be separated from the alloy; and, at the very worst, they mean something, — a praise to which much of what is called criticism in our time has no pretensions.

Savage's Life Johnson reprinted nearly as it had appeared in 1744. Whoever, after reading that Life, will turn to the other Lives will be struck by the difference of style. Since Johnson had been at ease in his circumstances he had written little and had talked much. When, therefore, he, after the lapse of years, resumed his pen, the mannerism which he had contracted while he was in the constant habit of elaborate composition was less perceptible than formerly; and his diction frequently had a colloquial ease which it had formerly wanted. The improvement may be discerned by a skilful critic in the Journey to the Hebrides, and in the Lives of the Poets is so obvious that it cannot escape the notice of the most careless reader.

Among the Lives the best are perhaps those of Cowley, Dryden, and Pope. The very worst is, beyond all doubt, that of Gray.

This great work at once became popular. There was, indeed, much just and much unjust censure; but even those who were loudest in blame were attracted by the book in spite of themselves. Malone computed the gains of the publishers at five or six thousand pounds. But the writer was very poorly remunerated. Intending at first to write very short prefaces, he had stipulated for only two hundred guineas. The booksellers, when they saw how far his performance had surpassed his promise, added only another hundred. Indeed, Johnson, though he did not despise, or affect to despise, money, and though his strong sense and long experience ought to have qualified him to protect his own interests, seems to have been singularly unskilful and unlucky in his literary bargains. He was generally reputed the first English writer of his time. Yet several writers of his time sold their copyrights for sums such as he never ventured to ask. To give a single instance, Robertson received four thousand five hundred pounds for the History of Charles the Fifth; and it is no disrespect to the memory of Robertson to say that the History of Charles the Fifth is both a less valuable and a less amusing book than the Lives of the Poets.

Johnson was now in his seventy-second year. The infirmities of age were coming fast upon him. That inevitable event of which he never thought without horror was brought near to him; and his whole life was darkened by the shadow of death. He had often to pay the cruel price of longevity. Every year he lost what could never be replaced. The strange dependents to whom he had given shelter, and to whom, in spite of their faults, he was strongly attached by habit, dropped off one by one; and, in the silence of his home, he regretted even the noise of their scolding-matches. The kind and generous Thrale was no more; and it would have been well if his wife had been laid beside him. But she survived to be the laughingstock of those who had envied her, and to draw from the eyes of the old man who had loved her beyond anything in the world tears far more bitter than he would have shed over her grave. With some estimable and many agreeable qualities, she was not made to be independent. The control of a mind more steadfast than her own was necessary to her respectability. While she was restrained by her husband, a man of sense and firmness, indulgent to her taste in trifles, but always the undisputed master of his house, her worst offences had been impertinent jokes, white lies, and short fits of pettishness ending in sunny good humor. But he was gone; and she was left an opulent widow of forty, with strong sensibility, volatile fancy, and slender judgment. She soon fell in love with a music-master from Brescia, in whom nobody but herself could discover anything to admire. Her pride, and perhaps some better feelings, struggled hard against this degrading passion. But the struggle irritated her nerves, soured her temper, and at length endangered her health. Conscious that her choice was one which Johnson could not approve, she became desirous to escape from his inspection. Her manner towards him changed. She was sometimes cold and sometimes petulant. She did not conceal her joy when he left Streatham; she never pressed him to return; and, if he came unbidden, she received him in a manner which convinced him that he was no longer a welcome guest. He took the very intelligible hints which she gave. He read, for the last time, a chapter of the Greek Testament in the library which had been formed by himself. In a solemn and tender prayer he commended the house and its inmates to the Divine protection, and, with emotions which choked his voice and convulsed his powerful frame, left forever that beloved home for the gloomy and desolate house behind Fleet Street, where the few and evil days which still remained to him were to run out. Here, in June, 1783, he had a paralytic stroke, from which, however, he recovered, and which does not appear to have at all impaired his intellectual faculties. But other maladies came thick upon him. His asthma tormented him day and night. Dropsical symptoms made their appearance. While sinking under a complication of diseases, he heard that the woman whose friendship had been the chief happiness of sixteen years of his life had married an Italian fiddler; that all London was crying shame upon her; and that the newspapers and magazines were filled with allusions to the Ephesian matron, and the two pictures in Hamlet. He vehemently said that he would try to forget her existence. He never uttered her name. Every memorial of her which met his eye he flung into the fire. She meanwhile fled from the laughter and hisses of her countrymen and countrywomen to a land where she was unknown, hastened across Mount Cenis, and learned, while passing a merry Christmas of concerts and lemonade parties at Milan, that the great man with whose name hers is inseparably associated had ceased to exist.

He had, in spite of much mental and much bodily affliction, clung vehemently to life. The feeling described in that fine but gloomy paper which closes the series of his Idlers seemed to grow stronger in him as his last hour drew near. He fancied that he should be able to draw his breath more easily in a southern climate, and would probably have set out for Rome and Naples but for his fear of the expense of the journey. That expense, indeed, he had the means of defraying; for he had laid up about two thousand pounds, the fruit of labors which had made the fortune of several publishers. But he was unwilling to break in upon this hoard; and he seems to have wished even to keep its existence a secret. Some of his friends hoped that the government might be induced to increase his pension to six hundred pounds a year; but this hope was disappointed; and he resolved to stand one English winter more. That winter was his last. His legs grew weaker; his breath grew shorter; the fatal water gathered fast, in spite of incisions which he, courageous against pain, but timid against death, urged his surgeons to make deeper and deeper. Though the tender care which had mitigated his sufferings during months of sickness at Streatham was withdrawn, he was not left desolate. The ablest physicians and surgeons attended him, and refused to accept fees from him. Burke parted from him with deep emotion. Windham sat much in the sickroom, arranged the pillows, and sent his own servant to watch a night by the bed. Frances Burney, whom the old man had cherished with fatherly kindness, stood weeping at the door; while Langton, whose piety eminently qualified him to be an adviser and comforter at such a time, received the last pressure of his friend's hand within. When at length the moment dreaded through so many years came close, the dark cloud passed away from Johnson's mind. His temper became unusually patient and gentle; he ceased to think with terror of death, and of that which lies beyond death; and he spoke much of the mercy of God and of the propitiation of Christ. In this serene frame of mind he died on the thirteenth of December, 1784. He was laid, a week later, in Westminster Abbey, among the eminent men of whom he had been the historian, — Cowley and Denham, Dryden and Congreve, Gay, Prior, and Addison.

Since his death the popularity of his works — the Lives of the Poets, and perhaps the Vanity of Human Wishes, excepted — has greatly diminished. His Dictionary has been altered by editors till it can scarcely be called his. An allusion to his Rambler or his Idler is not readily apprehended in literary circles. The fame even of Rasselas has grown somewhat dim. But though the celebrity of the writings may have declined, the celebrity of the writer, strange to say, is as great as ever. Boswell's book has done for him more than the best of his own books could do. The memory of other authors is kept alive by their works. But the memory of Johnson keeps many of his works alive. The old philosopher is still among us in the brown coat with the metal buttons and the shirt which ought to be at wash, blinking, puffing, rolling his head, drumming with his fingers, tearing his meat like a tiger, and swallowing his tea in oceans. No human being who has been more than seventy years in the grave is so well known to us. And it is but just to say that our intimate acquaintance with what he would himself have called the anfractuosities of his intellect and of his temper serves only to strengthen our conviction that he was both a great and a good man.

WILLIAM PITT

The Encyclopædia Britannica, January, 1859

William Pitt, the second son of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, and of Lady Hester Grenville, daughter of Hester, Countess Temple, was born on the twenty-eighth of May, 1759. The child inherited a name which, at the time of his birth, was the most illustrious in the civilized world, and was pronounced by every Englishman with pride, and by every enemy of England with mingled admiration and terror. During the first year of his life, every month had its illuminations and bonfires, and every wind brought some messenger charged with joyful tidings and hostile standards. In Westphalia the English infantry won a great battle which arrested the armies of Louis the Fifteenth in the midst of a career of conquest; Boscawen defeated one French fleet on the coast of Portugal; Hawke put to flight another in the Bay of Biscay; Johnson took Niagara; Amherst took Ticonderoga; Wolfe died by the most enviable of deaths under the walls of Quebec; Clive destroyed a Dutch armament in the Hooghly, and established the English supremacy in Bengal; Coote routed Lally at Wandewash, and established the English supremacy in the Carnatic. The nation, while loudly applauding the successful warriors, considered them all, on sea and on land, in Europe, in America, and in Asia, merely as instruments which received their direction from one superior mind. It was the great William Pitt, the great Commoner, who had vanquished French marshals in Germany, and French admirals on the Atlantic; who had conquered for his country one great empire on the frozen shores of Ontario, and another under the tropical sun near the mouths of the Ganges. It was not in the nature of things that popularity such as he at this time enjoyed should be permanent. That popularity had lost its gloss before his children were old enough to understand that their father was a great man. He was at length placed in situations in which neither his talents for administration nor his talents for debate appeared to the best advantage. The energy and decision which had eminently fitted him for the direction of war were not needed in time of peace. The lofty and spirit-stirring eloquence which had made him supreme in the House of Commons often fell dead on the House of Lords. A cruel malady racked his joints, and left his joints only to fall on his nerves and on his brain. During the closing years of his life, he was odious to the court, and yet was not on cordial terms with the great body of the opposition. Chatham was only the ruin of Pitt, but an awful and majestic ruin, not to be contemplated by any man of sense and feeling without emotions resembling those which are excited by the remains of the Parthenon and of the Coliseum. In one respect the old statesman was eminently happy. Whatever might be the vicissitudes of his public life, he never failed to find peace and love by his own hearth. He loved all his children, and was loved by them; and of all his children the one of whom he was fondest and proudest was his second son.

The child's genius and ambition displayed themselves with a rare and almost unnatural precocity. At seven the interest which he took in grave subjects, the ardor with which he pursued his studies, and the sense and vivacity of his remarks on books and on events, amazed his parents and instructors. One of his sayings of this date was reported to his mother by his tutor. In August, 1766, when the world was agitated by the news that Mr. Pitt had become Earl of Chatham, little William exclaimed: "I am glad that I am not the eldest son. I want to speak in the House of Commons like papa."

A letter is extant in which Lady Chatham, a woman of considerable abilities, remarked to her lord that their younger son at twelve had left far behind him his elder brother, who was fifteen. "The fineness," she wrote, "of William's mind makes him enjoy with the greatest pleasure what would be above the reach of any other creature of his small age." At fourteen the lad was in intellect a man. Hayley, who met him at Lyme in the summer of 1773, was astonished, delighted, and somewhat overawed by hearing wit and wisdom from so young a mouth. The poet, indeed, was afterwards sorry that his shyness had prevented him from submitting the plan of an extensive literary work, which he was then meditating, to the judgment of this extraordinary boy. The boy, indeed, had already written a tragedy, bad of course, but not worse than the tragedies of his friend. This piece is still preserved at Chevening, and is in some respects highly curious. There is no love. The whole plot is political; and it is remarkable that the interest, such as it is, turns on a contest about a regency. On one side is a faithful servant of the Crown, on the other an ambitious and unprincipled conspirator. At length, the king, who had been missing, reappears, resumes his power, and rewards the faithful defender of his rights. A reader who should judge only by internal evidence would have no hesitation in pronouncing that the play was written by some Pittite poetaster at the time of the rejoicings for the recovery of George the Third in 1789.

The pleasure with which William's parents observed the rapid development of his intellectual powers was alloyed by apprehensions about his health. He shot up alarmingly fast; he was often ill and always weak; and it was feared that it would be impossible to rear a stripling so tall, so slender, and so feeble. Port wine was prescribed by his medical advisers; and it is said that he was, at fourteen, accustomed to take this agreeable physic in quantities which would, in our abstemious age, be thought much more than sufficient for any full-grown man. This regimen, though it would probably have killed ninety-nine boys out of a hundred, seems to have been well suited to the peculiarities of William's constitution; for at fifteen he ceased to be molested by disease, and, though never a strong man, continued, during many years of labor and anxiety, of nights passed in debate and of summers passed in London, to be a tolerably healthy one. It was probably on account of the delicacy of his frame that he was not educated like other boys of the same rank. Almost all the eminent English statesmen and orators to whom he was afterwards opposed or allied, North, Fox, Shelburne, Windham, Grey, Wellesley, Grenville, Sheridan, Canning, went through the training of great public schools. Lord Chatham had himself been a distinguished Etonian; and it is seldom that a distinguished Etonian forgets his obligations to Eton. But William's infirmities required a vigilance and tenderness such as could be found only at home. He was therefore bred under the paternal roof. His studies were superintended by a clergyman named Wilson; and those studies, though often interrupted by illness, were prosecuted with extraordinary success. Before the lad had completed his fifteenth year, his knowledge both of the ancient languages and of mathematics was such as very few men of eighteen then carried up to college. He was therefore sent, towards the close of the year 1773, to Pembroke Hall, in the University of Cambridge. So young a student required much more than the ordinary care which a college tutor bestows on undergraduates. The governor, to whom the direction of William's academical life was confided, was a bachelor of arts named Pretyman, who had been senior wrangler in the preceding year, and who, though not a man of prepossessing appearance or brilliant parts, was eminently acute and laborious, a sound scholar, and an excellent geometrician. At Cambridge Pretyman was, during more than two years, the inseparable companion, and indeed almost the only companion, of his pupil. A close and lasting friendship sprang up between the pair. The disciple was able, before he completed his twenty-eighth year, to make his preceptor Bishop of Lincoln and Dean of St. Paul's; and the preceptor showed his gratitude by writing a Life of the disciple, which enjoys the distinction of being the worst biographical work of its size in the world.

Pitt, till he graduated, had scarcely one acquaintance, attended chapel regularly morning and evening, dined every day in hall, and never went to a single evening party. At seventeen, he was admitted, after the bad fashion of those times, by right of birth, without any examination, to the degree of Master of Arts. But he continued during some years to reside at college, and to apply himself vigorously, under Pretyman's direction, to the studies of the place, while mixing freely in the best academic society.

The stock of learning which Pitt laid in during this part of his life was certainly very extraordinary. In fact, it was all that he ever possessed; for he very early became too busy to have any spare time for books. The work in which he took the greatest delight was Newton's Principia. His liking for mathematics, indeed, amounted to a passion, which, in the opinion of his instructors, themselves distinguished mathematicians, required to be checked rather than encouraged. The acuteness and readiness with which he solved problems was pronounced by one of the ablest of the moderators, who in those days presided over the disputations in the schools, and conducted the examinations of the Senate House, to be unrivalled in the university. Nor was the youth's proficiency in classical learning less remarkable. In one respect, indeed, he appeared to disadvantage when compared with even second-rate and third-rate men from public schools. He had never, while under Wilson's care, been in the habit of composing in the ancient languages; and he therefore never acquired that knack of versification which is sometimes possessed by clever boys whose knowledge of the language and literature of Greece and Rome is very superficial. It would have been utterly out of his power to produce such charming elegiac lines as those in which Wellesley bade farewell to Eton, or such Virgilian hexameters as those in which Canning described the pilgrimage to Mecca. But it may be doubted whether any scholar has ever, at twenty, had a more solid and profound knowledge of the two great tongues of the old civilized world. The facility with which he penetrated the meaning of the most intricate sentences in the Attic writers astonished veteran critics. He had set his heart on being intimately acquainted with all the extant poetry of Greece, and was not satisfied till he had mastered Lycophron's Cassandra, the most obscure work in the whole range of ancient literature. This strange rhapsody, the difficulties of which have perplexed and repelled many excellent scholars, "he read," says his preceptor, "with an ease at first sight which, if I had not witnessed it, I should have thought beyond the compass of human intellect."

To modern literature Pitt paid comparatively little attention. He knew no living language except French; and French he knew very imperfectly. With a few of the best English writers he was intimate, particularly with Shakespeare and Milton. The debate in Pandemonium was, as it well deserved to be, one of his favorite passages; and his early friends used to talk, long after his death, of the just emphasis and the melodious cadence with which they had heard him recite the incomparable speech of Belial. He had indeed been carefully trained from infancy in the art of managing his voice, — a voice naturally clear and deep-toned. His father, whose oratory owed no small part of its effect to that art, had been a most skilful and judicious instructor. At a later period, the wits of Brookes's, irritated by observing, night after night, how powerfully Pitt's sonorous elocution fascinated the rows of country gentlemen, reproached him with having been "taught by his dad on a stool."

His education, indeed, was well adapted to form a great parliamentary speaker. One argument often urged against those classical studies which occupy so large a part of the early life of every gentleman bred in the south of our island is, that they prevent him from acquiring a command of his mother tongue, and that it is not unusual to meet with a youth of excellent parts, who writes Ciceronian Latin prose and Horatian Latin alcaics, but who would find it impossible to express his thoughts in pure, perspicuous, and forcible English. There may perhaps be some truth in this observation. But the classical studies of Pitt were carried on in a peculiar manner, and had the effect of enriching his English vocabulary, and of making him wonderfully expert in the art of constructing correct English sentences. His practice was to look over a page or two of a Greek or Latin author, to make himself master of the meaning, and then to read the passage straightforward into his own language. This practice, begun under his first teacher, Wilson, was continued under Pretyman. It is not strange that a young man of great abilities, who had been exercised daily in this way during ten years, should have acquired an almost unrivalled power of putting his thoughts, without premeditation, into words well selected and well arranged.

Of all the remains of antiquity, the orations were those on which he bestowed the most minute examination. His favorite employment was to compare harangues on opposite sides of the same question, to analyze them, and to observe which of the arguments of the first speaker were refuted by the second, which were evaded, and which were left untouched. Nor was it only in books that he at this time studied the art of parliamentary fencing. When he was at home he had frequent opportunities of hearing important debates at Westminster; and he heard them, not only with interest and enjoyment, but with a close scientific attention resembling that with which a diligent pupil at Guy's Hospital watches every turn of the hand of a great surgeon through a difficult operation. On one of these occasions, Pitt, a youth whose abilities were as yet known only to his own family and to a small knot of college friends, was introduced on the steps of the throne in the House of Lords to Fox, who was his senior by eleven years, and who was already the greatest debater, and one of the greatest orators, that had appeared in England. Fox used afterwards to relate that, as the discussion proceeded, Pitt repeatedly turned to him, and said, "But surely, Mr. Fox, that might be met thus;" or, "Yes; but he lays himself open to this retort." What the particular criticisms were Fox had forgotten; but he said that he was much struck at the time by the precocity of a lad who, through the whole sitting, seemed to be thinking only how all the speeches on both sides could be answered.

One of the young man's visits to the House of Lords was a sad and memorable era in his life. He had not quite completed his nineteenth year when, on the seventh of April, 1778, he attended his father to Westminster. A great debate was expected. It was known that France had recognized the independence of the United States. The Duke of Richmond was about to declare his opinion that all thought of subjugating those States ought to be relinquished. Chatham had always maintained that the resistance of the colonies to the mother country was justifiable. But he conceived, very erroneously, that on the day on which their independence should be acknowledged the greatness of England would be at an end. Though sinking under the weight of years and infirmities, he determined, in spite of the entreaties of his family, to be in his place. His son supported him to a seat. The excitement and exertion were too much for the old man. In the very act of addressing the peers, he fell back in convulsions. A few weeks later his corpse was borne, with gloomy pomp, from the Painted Chamber to the Abbey. The favorite child and namesake of the deceased statesman followed the coffin as chief mourner, and saw it deposited in the transept where his own was destined to lie.

His elder brother, now Earl of Chatham, had means sufficient, and barely sufficient, to support the dignity of the peerage. The other members of the family were poorly provided for. William had little more than three hundred a year. It was necessary for him to follow a profession. He had already begun to eat his terms. In the spring of 1780 he came of age. He then quitted Cambridge, was called to the bar, took chambers in Lincoln's Inn, and joined the western circuit. In the autumn of that year a general election took place; and he offered himself as a candidate for the university; but he was at the bottom of the poll. It is said that the grave doctors, who then sat, robed in scarlet, on the benches of Golgotha, thought it great presumption in so young a man to solicit so high a distinction. He was, however, at the request of a hereditary friend, the Duke of Rutland, brought into Parliament by Sir James Lowther for the borough of Appleby.

The dangers of the country were at that time such as might well have disturbed even a constant mind. Army after army had been sent in vain against the rebellious colonists of North America. On pitched fields of battle the advantage had been with the disciplined troops of the mother country. But it was not on pitched fields of battle that the event of such a contest could be decided. An armed nation, with hunger and the Atlantic for auxiliaries, was not to be subjugated. Meanwhile the House of Bourbon, humbled to the dust a few years before by the genius and vigor of Chatham, had seized the opportunity of revenge. France and Spain were united against us, and had recently been joined by Holland. The command of the Mediterranean had been for a time lost. The British flag had been scarcely able to maintain itself in the British Channel. The northern powers professed neutrality; but their neutrality had a menacing aspect. In the East, Hyder had descended on the Carnatic, had destroyed the little army of Baillie, and had spread terror even to the ramparts of Fort St. George. The discontents of Ireland threatened nothing less than civil war. In England the authority of the government had sunk to the lowest point. The King and the House of Commons were alike unpopular. The cry for parliamentary reform was scarcely less loud and vehement than in the autumn of 1830. Formidable associations, headed, not by ordinary demagogues but by men of high rank, stainless character, and distinguished ability, demanded a revision of the representative system. The populace, emboldened by the impotence and irresolution of the government, had recently broken loose from all restraint, besieged the chambers of the legislature, hustled peers, hunted bishops, attacked the residences of ambassadors, opened prisons, burned and pulled down houses. London had presented during some days the aspect of a city taken by storm; and it had been necessary to form a camp among the trees of St. James's Park.

In spite of dangers and difficulties abroad and at home, George the Third, with a firmness which had little affinity with virtue or with wisdom, persisted in his determination to put down the American rebels by force of arms; and his ministers submitted their judgment to his. Some of them were probably actuated merely by selfish cupidity; but their chief, Lord North, a man of high honor, amiable temper, winning manners, lively wit, and excellent talents both for business and for debate, must be acquitted of all sordid motives. He remained at a post from which he had long wished and had repeatedly tried to escape, only because he had not sufficient fortitude to resist the entreaties and reproaches of the King, who silenced all arguments by passionately asking whether any gentleman, any man of spirit, could have the heart to desert a kind master in the hour of extremity.

The opposition consisted of two parties which had once been hostile to each other, and which had been very slowly, and, as it soon appeared, very imperfectly reconciled, but which at this conjuncture seemed to act together with cordiality. The larger of these parties consisted of the great body of the Whig aristocracy. Its head was Charles, Marquess of Rockingham, a man of sense and virtue, and in wealth and parliamentary interest equalled by very few of the English nobles, but afflicted with a nervous timidity which prevented him from taking a prominent part in debate. In the House of Commons, the adherents of Rockingham were led by Fox, whose dissipated habits and ruined fortunes were the talk of the whole town, but whose commanding genius, and whose sweet, generous, and affectionate disposition, extorted the admiration and love of those who most lamented the errors of his private life. Burke, superior to Fox in largeness of comprehension, in extent of knowledge, and in splendor of imagination, but less skilled in that kind of logic and in that kind of rhetoric which convince and persuade great assemblies, was willing to be the lieutenant of a young chief who might have been his son.

A smaller section of the opposition was composed of the old followers of Chatham. At their head was William, Earl of Shelburne, distinguished both as a statesman and as a lover of science and letters. With him were leagued Lord Camden, who had formerly held the Great Seal, and whose integrity, ability, and constitutional knowledge commanded the public respect; Barré, an eloquent and acrimonious declaimer; and Dunning, who had long held the first place at the English bar. It was to this party that Pitt was naturally attracted.

On the twenty-sixth of February, 1781, he made his first speech, in favor of Burke's plan of economical reform. Fox stood up at the same moment, but instantly gave way. The lofty yet animated deportment of the young member, his perfect self-possession, the readiness with which he replied to the orators who had preceded him, the silver tones of his voice, the perfect structure of his unpremeditated sentences, astonished and delighted his hearers. Burke, moved even to tears, exclaimed, "It is not a chip of the old block; it is the old block itself!" "Pitt will be one of the first men in Parliament," said a member of the opposition to Fox. "He is so already," answered Fox, in whose nature envy had no place. It is a curious fact, well remembered by some who were very recently living, that soon after this debate Pitt's name was put up by Fox at Brookes's.

On two subsequent occasions during that session Pitt addressed the House, and on both fully sustained the reputation which he had acquired on his first appearance. In the summer, after the prorogation, he again went the western circuit, held several briefs, and acquitted himself in such a manner that he was highly complimented by Buller from the bench, and by Dunning at the bar.

On the twenty-seventh of November the Parliament reassembled. Only forty-eight hours before had arrived tidings of the surrender of Cornwallis and his army; and it had consequently been necessary to rewrite the royal speech. Every man in the kingdom, except the King, was now convinced that it was mere madness to think of conquering the United States. In the debate on the report of the address, Pitt spoke with even more energy and brilliancy than on any former occasion. He was warmly applauded by his allies; but it was remarked that no person on his own side of the house was so loud in eulogy as Henry Dundas, the Lord Advocate of Scotland, who spoke from the ministerial ranks. That able and versatile politician distinctly foresaw the approaching downfall of the government with which he was connected, and was preparing to make his own escape from the ruin. From that night dates his connection with Pitt,—a connection which soon became a close intimacy, and which lasted till it was dissolved by death.

About a fortnight later, Pitt spoke in the committee of supply on the army estimates. Symptoms of dissension had begun to appear on the Treasury bench. Lord George Germaine, the Secretary of State who was especially charged with the direction of the war in America, had held language not easily to be reconciled with declarations made by the First Lord of the Treasury. Pitt noticed the discrepancy with much force and keenness. Lord George and Lord North began to whisper together; and Welbore Ellis, an ancient placeman who had been drawing salary almost every quarter since the days of Henry Pelham, bent down between them to put in a word. Such interruptions sometimes discompose veteran speakers. Pitt stopped, and, looking at the group, said, with admirable readiness, "I shall wait till Nestor has composed the dispute between Agamemnon and Achilles."

After several defeats, or victories hardly to be distinguished from defeats, the ministry resigned. The King, reluctantly and ungraciously, consented to accept Rockingham as first minister. Fox and Shelburne became Secretaries of State. Lord John Cavendish, one of the most upright and honorable of men, was made Chancellor of the Exchequer. Thurlow, whose abilities and force of character had made him the dictator of the House of Lords, continued to hold the Great Seal.

To Pitt was offered, through Shelburne, the Vice-Treasurership of Ireland, one of the easiest and most highly paid places in the gift of the Crown; but the offer was, without hesitation, declined. The young statesman had resolved to accept no post which did not entitle him to a seat in the cabinet; and, a few days later, he announced that resolution in the House of Commons. It must be remembered that the cabinet was then a much smaller and more select body than at present. We have seen cabinets of sixteen. In the time of our grandfathers a cabinet of ten or eleven was thought inconveniently large. Seven was an usual number. Even Burke, who had taken the lucrative office of paymaster, was not in the cabinet. Many therefore thought Pitt's declaration indecent. He himself was sorry that he had made it. The words, he said in private, had escaped him in the heat of speaking; and he had no sooner uttered them than he would have given the world to recall them. They, however, did him no harm with the public. The second William Pitt, it was said, had shown that he had inherited the spirit, as well as the genius, of the first. In the son, as in the father, there might perhaps be too much pride; but there was nothing low or sordid. It might be called arrogance in a young barrister, living in chambers on three hundred a year, to refuse a salary of five thousand a year, merely because he did not choose to bind himself to speak or vote for plans which he had no share in framing; but surely such arrogance was not very far removed from virtue.

Pitt gave a general support to the administration of Rockingham, but omitted, in the meantime, no opportunity of courting that Ultra-Whig party which the persecution of Wilkes and the Middlesex Election had called into existence, and which the disastrous events of the war, and the triumph of republican principles in America, had made formidable both in numbers and in temper. He supported a motion for shortening the duration of Parliaments. He made a motion for a committee to examine into the state of the representation, and, in the speech by which that motion was introduced, avowed himself the enemy of the close boroughs, the strongholds of that corruption to which he attributed all the calamities of the nation, and which, as he phrased it in one of those exact and sonorous sentences of which he had a boundless command, had grown with the growth of England and strengthened with her strength, but had not diminished with her diminution or decayed with her decay. On this occasion he was supported by Fox. The motion was lost by only twenty votes in a house of more than three hundred members. The reformers never again had so good a division till the year 1831.

The new administration was strong in abilities, and was more popular than any administration which had held office since the first year of George the Third, but was hated by the King, hesitatingly supported by the Parliament, and torn by internal dissensions. The Chancellor was disliked and distrusted by almost all his colleagues. The two Secretaries of State regarded each other with no friendly feeling. The line between their departments had not been traced with precision; and there were consequently jealousies, encroachments, and complaints. It was all that Rockingham could do to keep the peace in his cabinet; and before the cabinet had existed three months, Rockingham died.

In an instant all was confusion. The adherents of the deceased statesman looked on the Duke of Portland as their chief. The King placed Shelburne at the head of the Treasury. Fox, Lord John Cavendish, and Burke immediately resigned their offices; and the new prime minister was left to constitute a government out of very defective materials. His own parliamentary talents were great; but he could not be in the place where parliamentary talents were most needed. It was necessary to find some member of the House of Commons who could confront the great orators of the opposition; and Pitt alone had the eloquence and the courage which were required. He was offered the great place of Chancellor of the Exchequer; and he accepted it. He had scarcely completed his twenty-third year.

The Parliament was speedily prorogued. During the recess, a negotiation for peace which had been commenced under Rockingham was brought to a successful termination. England acknowledged the independence of her revolted colonies; and she ceded to her European enemies some places in the Mediterranean and in the Gulf of Mexico. But the terms which she obtained were quite as advantageous and honorable as the events of the war entitled her to expect, or as she was likely to obtain by persevering in a contest against immense odds. All her vital parts, all the real sources of her power, remained uninjured. She preserved even her dignity; for she ceded to the House of Bourbon only part of what she had won from that House in previous wars. She retained her Indian empire undiminished; and, in spite of the mightiest efforts of two great monarchies, her flag still waved on the rock of Gibraltar. There is not the slightest reason to believe that Fox, if he had remained in office, would have hesitated one moment about concluding a treaty on such conditions. Unhappily that great and most amiable man was, at this crisis, hurried by his passions into an error which made his genius and his virtues, during a long course of years, almost useless to his country.

He saw that the great body of the House of Commons was divided into three parties, his own, that of North, and that of Shelburne; that none of those three parties was large enough to stand alone; that, therefore, unless two of them united, there must be a miserably feeble administration, or, more probably, a rapid succession of miserably feeble administrations, and this at a time when a strong government was essential to the prosperity and respectability of the nation. It was then necessary and right that there should be a coalition. To every possible coalition there were objections. But, of all possible coalitions, that to which there were the fewest objections was undoubtedly a coalition between Shelburne and Fox. It would have been generally applauded by the followers of both. It might have been made without any sacrifice of public principle on the part of either. Unhappily, recent bickerings had left in the mind of Fox a profound dislike and distrust of Shelburne. Pitt attempted to mediate, and was authorized to invite Fox to return to the service of the Crown. "Is Lord Shelburne," said Fox, "to remain prime minister?" Pitt answered in the affirmative. "It is impossible that I can act under him," said Fox. "Then negotiation is at an end," said Pitt; "for I cannot betray him." Thus the two statesmen parted. They were never again in a private room together.

As Fox and his friends would not treat with Shelburne, nothing remained to them but to treat with North. That fatal coalition which is emphatically called "The Coalition" was formed. Not three quarters of a year had elapsed since Fox and Burke had threatened North with impeachment, and had described him, night after night, as the most arbitrary, the most corrupt, the most incapable of ministers. They now allied themselves with him for the purpose of driving from office a statesman with whom they cannot be said to have differed as to any important question. Nor had they even the prudence and the patience to wait for some occasion on which they might, without inconsistency, have combined with their old enemies in opposition to the government. That nothing might be wanting to the scandal, the great orators, who had, during seven years, thundered against the war, determined to join with the authors of that war in passing a vote of censure on the peace.

The Parliament met before Christmas, 1782. But it was not till January, 1783, that the preliminary treaties were signed. On the seventeenth of February they were taken into consideration by the House of Commons. There had been, during some days, floating rumors that Fox and North had coalesced; and the debate indicated but too clearly that those rumors were not unfounded. Pitt was suffering from indisposition; he did not rise till his own strength and that of his hearers were exhausted; and he was consequently less successful than on any former occasion. His admirers owned that his speech was feeble and petulant. He so far forgot himself as to advise Sheridan to confine himself to amusing theatrical audiences. This ignoble sarcasm gave Sheridan an opportunity of retorting with great felicity. "After what I have seen and heard to-night," he said, "I really feel strongly tempted to venture on a competition with so great an artist as Ben Jonson, and to bring on the stage a second Angry Boy." On a division, the address proposed by the supporters of the government was rejected by a majority of sixteen.

But Pitt was not a man to be disheartened by a single failure, or to be put down by the most lively repartee. When, a few days later, the opposition proposed a resolution directly censuring the treaties, he spoke with an eloquence, energy, and dignity which raised his fame and popularity higher than ever. To the coalition of Fox and North he alluded in language which drew forth tumultuous applause from his followers. "If," he said, "this ill-omened and unnatural marriage be not yet consummated, I know of a just and lawful impediment; and, in the name of the public weal, I forbid the banns."

The ministers were again left in a minority; and Shelburne consequently tendered his resignation. It was accepted; but the King struggled long and hard before he submitted to the terms dictated by Fox, whose faults he detested, and whose high spirit and powerful intellect he detested still more. The first place at the board of Treasury was repeatedly offered to Pitt; but the offer, though tempting, was steadfastly declined. The young man, whose judgment was as precocious as his eloquence, saw that his time was coming, but was not come, and was deaf to royal importunities and reproaches. His Majesty, bitterly complaining of Pitt's faint-heartedness, tried to break the coalition. Every art of seduction was practised on North, but in vain. During several weeks the country remained without a government. It was not till all devices had failed, and till the aspect of the House of Commons became threatening, that the King gave way. The Duke of Portland was declared First Lord of the Treasury. Thurlow was dismissed. Fox and North became Secretaries of State, with power ostensibly equal. But Fox was the real prime minister.

The year was far advanced before the new arrangements were completed; and nothing very important was done during the remainder of the session. Pitt, now seated on the opposite bench, brought the question of parliamentary reform a second time under the consideration of the Commons. He proposed to add to the House at once a hundred county members and several members for metropolitan districts, and to enact that every borough of which an election committee should report that the majority of voters appeared to be corrupt should lose the franchise. The motion was rejected by 293 votes to 149.

After the prorogation, Pitt visited the Continent for the first and last time. His travelling companion was one of his most intimate friends, a young man of his own age, who had already distinguished himself in Parliament by an engaging natural eloquence, set off by the sweetest and most exquisitely modulated of human voices, and whose affectionate heart, caressing manners, and brilliant wit made him the most delightful of companions, William Wilberforce. That was the time of Anglomania in France; and at Paris the son of the great Chatham was absolutely hunted by men of letters and women of fashion, and forced, much against his will, into political disputation. One remarkable saying which dropped from him during this tour has been preserved. A French gentleman expressed some surprise at the immense influence which Fox, a man of pleasure, ruined by the dice-box and the turf, exercised over the English nation. "You have not," said Pitt, "been under the wand of the magician."

In November, 1783, the Parliament met again. The government had irresistible strength in the House of Commons, and seemed to be scarcely less strong in the House of Lords, but was, in truth, surrounded on every side by dangers. The King was impatiently waiting for the moment at which he could emancipate himself from a yoke which galled him so severely that he had more than once seriously thought of retiring to Hanover; and the King was scarcely more eager for a change than the nation. Fox and North had committed a fatal error. They ought to have known that coalitions between parties which have long been hostile can succeed only when the wish for coalition pervades the lower ranks of both. If the leaders unite before there is any disposition to union among the followers, the probability is that there will be a mutiny in both camps, and that the two revolted armies will make a truce with each other, in order to be revenged on those by whom they think that they have been betrayed. Thus it was in 1783. At the beginning of that eventful year, North had been the recognized head of the old Tory party, which, though for a moment prostrated by the disastrous issue of the American war, was still a great power in the state. To him the clergy, the universities, and that large body of country gentlemen whose rallying cry was "Church and King!" had long looked up with respect and confidence. Fox had, on the other hand, been the idol of the Whigs, and of the whole body of Protestant dissenters. The coalition at once alienated the most zealous Tories from North, and the most zealous Whigs from Fox. The University of Oxford, which had marked its approbation of North's orthodoxy by electing him chancellor, the city of London, which had been during two-and-twenty years at war with the Court, were equally disgusted. Squires and rectors, who had inherited the principles of the Cavaliers of the preceding century, could not forgive their old leader for combining with disloyal subjects in order to put a force on the Sovereign. The members of the Bill of Rights Society and of the Reform Associations were enraged by learning that their favorite orator now called the great champion of tyranny and corruption his noble friend. Two great multitudes were at once left without any head, and both at once turned their eyes on Pitt. One party saw in him the only man who could rescue the King; the other saw in him the only man who could purify the Parliament. He was supported on one side by Archbishop Markham, the preacher of divine right, and by Jenkinson, the captain of the Prætorian band of the King's friends; on the other side by Jebb and Priestely, Sawbridge and Cartwright, Jack Wilkes and Horne Tooke. On the benches of the House of Commons, however, the ranks of the ministerial majority were unbroken; and that any statesman would venture to brave such a majority was thought impossible. No prince of the Hanoverian line had ever, under any provocation, ventured to appeal from the representative body to the constituent body. The ministers, therefore, notwithstanding the sullen looks and muttered words of displeasure with which their suggestions were received in the closet, notwithstanding the roar of obloquy which was rising louder and louder every day from every corner of the island, thought themselves secure.

Such was their confidence in their strength that, as soon as the Parliament had met, they brought forward a singularly bold and original plan for the government of the British territories in India. What was proposed was that the whole authority, which till that time had been exercised over those territories by the East India Company, should be transferred to seven Commissioners who were to be named by Parliament, and were not to be removable at the pleasure of the Crown. Earl Fitzwilliam, the most intimate personal friend of Fox, was to be chairman of this board; and the eldest son of North was to be one of the members.

As soon as the outlines of the scheme were known, all the hatred which the coalition had excited burst forth with an astounding explosion. The question which ought undoubtedly to have been considered as paramount to every other was, whether the proposed change was likely to be beneficial or injurious to the thirty millions of people who were subject to the Company. But that question cannot be said to have been even seriously discussed. Burke, who, whether right or wrong in the conclusions to which he came, had at least the merit of looking at the subject in the right point of view, vainly reminded his hearers of that mighty population whose daily rice might depend on a vote of the British Parliament. He spoke, with even more than his wonted power of thought and language, about the desolation of Rohilcund, about the spoliation of Benares, about the evil policy which had suffered the tanks of the Carnatic to go to ruin; but he could scarcely obtain a hearing. The contending parties, to their shame it must be said, would listen to none but English topics. Out of doors the cry against the ministry was almost universal. Town and country were united. Corporations exclaimed against the violation of the charter of the greatest corporation in the realm. Tories and democrats joined in pronouncing the proposed board an unconstitutional body. It was to consist of Fox's nominees. The effect of his bill was to give, not to the Crown, but to him personally, whether in office or in opposition, an enormous power, a patronage sufficient to counterbalance the patronage of the Treasury and of the Admiralty, and to decide the elections for fifty boroughs. He knew, it was said, that he was hateful alike to King and people; and he had devised a plan which would make him independent of both. Some nicknamed him Cromwell, and some Carlo Khan. Wilberforce, with his usual felicity of expression, and with very unusual bitterness of feeling, described the scheme as the genuine offspring of the coalition, as marked with the features of both its parents, the corruption of one and the violence of the other. In spite of all opposition, however, the bill was supported in every stage by great majorities, was rapidly passed, and was sent up to the Lords. To the general astonishment, when the second reading was moved in the Upper House, the Opposition proposed an adjournment, and carried it by eighty-seven votes to seventy-nine. The cause of this strange turn of fortune was soon known. Pitt's cousin, Earl Temple, had been in the royal closet, and had there been authorized to let it be known that his Majesty would consider all who voted for the bill as his enemies. The ignominious commission was performed; and instantly a troop of Lords of the Bedchamber, of Bishops who wished to be translated, and of Scotch peers who wished to be reëlected, made haste to change sides. On a later day the Lords rejected the bill. Fox and North were immediately directed to send their seals to the palace by their Under Secretaries; and Pitt was appointed First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The general opinion was that there would be an immediate dissolution. But Pitt wisely determined to give the public feeling time to gather strength. On this point he differed from his kinsman Temple. The consequence was that Temple, who had been appointed one of the Secretaries of State, resigned his office forty-eight hours after he had accepted it, and thus relieved the new government from a great load of unpopularity; for all men of sense and honor, however strong might be their dislike of the India Bill, disapproved of the manner in which that bill had been thrown out. Temple carried away with him the scandal which the best friends of the new government could not but lament. The fame of the young prime minister preserved its whiteness. He could declare with perfect truth that, if unconstitutional machinations had been employed, he had been no party to them.

He was, however, surrounded by difficulties and dangers. In the House of Lords, indeed, he had a majority, nor could any orator of the Opposition in that assembly be considered as a match for Thurlow, who was now again Chancellor, or for Camden, who cordially supported the son of his old friend Chatham. But in the other House there was not a single eminent speaker among the official men who sat round Pitt. His most useful assistant was Dundas, who, though he had not eloquence, had sense, knowledge, readiness, and boldness. On the opposite benches was a powerful majority, led by Fox, who was supported by Burke, North, and Sheridan. The heart of the young minister, stout as it was, almost died within him. He could not once close his eyes on the night which followed Temple's resignation. But whatever his internal emotions might be, his language and deportment indicated nothing but unconquerable firmness and haughty confidence in his own powers. His contest against the House of Commons lasted from the seventeenth of December, 1783, to the eighth of March, 1784. In sixteen divisions the Opposition triumphed. Again and again the King was requested to dismiss his ministers. But he was determined to go to Germany rather than yield. Pitt's resolution never wavered. The cry of the nation in his favor became vehement and almost furious. Addresses assuring him of public support came up daily from every part of the kingdom. The freedom of the city of London was presented to him in a gold box. He went in state to receive this mark of distinction. He was sumptuously feasted in Grocers' Hall; and the shopkeepers of the Strand and Fleet Street illuminated their houses in his honor. These things could not but produce an effect within the walls of Parliament. The ranks of the majority began to waver; a few passed over to the enemy; some skulked away; many were for capitulating while it was still possible to capitulate with the honors of war. Negotiations were opened with the view of forming an administration on a wide basis; but they had scarcely been opened when they were closed. The Opposition demanded, as a preliminary article of the treaty, that Pitt should resign the Treasury; and with this demand Pitt steadfastly refused to comply. While the contest was raging, the Clerkship of the Pells, a sinecure place for life, worth three thousand a year, and tenable with a seat in the House of Commons, became vacant. The appointment was with the Chancellor of the Exchequer; nobody doubted that he would appoint himself; and nobody could have blamed him if he had done so; for such sinecure offices had always been defended on the ground that they enabled a few men of eminent abilities and small incomes to live without any profession, and to devote themselves to the service of the state. Pitt, in spite of the remonstrances of his friends, gave the Pells to his father's old adherent, Colonel Barré, a man distinguished by talent and eloquence, but poor and afflicted with blindness. By this arrangement a pension which the Rockingham administration had granted to Barré was saved to the public. Never was there a happier stroke of policy. About treaties, wars, expeditions, tariffs, budgets, there will always be room for dispute. The policy which is applauded by half the nation may be condemned by the other half. But pecuniary disinterestedness everybody comprehends. It is a great thing for a man who has only three hundred a year to be able to show that he considers three thousand a year as mere dirt beneath his feet, when compared with the public interest and the public esteem. Pitt had his reward. No minister was ever more rancorously libelled; but, even when he was known to be overwhelmed with debt, when millions were passing through his hands, when the wealthiest magnates of the realm were soliciting him for marquisates and garters, his bitterest enemies did not dare to accuse him of touching unlawful gain.

At length the hard-fought fight ended. A final remonstrance, drawn up by Burke with admirable skill, was carried on the eighth of March by a single vote in a full House. Had the experiment been repeated, the supporters of the coalition would probably have been in a minority. But the supplies had been voted; the Mutiny Bill had been passed; and the Parliament was dissolved.

The popular constituent bodies all over the country were in general enthusiastic on the side of the new government. A hundred and sixty of the supporters of the coalition lost their seats. The First Lord of the Treasury himself came in at the head of the poll for the University of Cambridge. His young friend, Wilberforce, was elected knight of the great shire of York in opposition to the whole influence of the Fitzwilliams, Cavendishes, Dundases, and Saviles. In the midst of such triumphs Pitt completed his twenty-fifth year. He was now the greatest subject that England had seen during many generations. He domineered absolutely over the cabinet, and was the favorite at once of the Sovereign, of the Parliament, and of the nation. His father had never been so powerful, nor Walpole, nor Marlborough.

This narrative has now reached a point, beyond which a full history of the life of Pitt would be a history of England, or rather of the whole civilized world; and for such a history this is not the proper place. Here a very slight sketch must suffice; and in that sketch prominence will be given to such points as may enable a reader who is already acquainted with the general course of events to form a just notion of the character of the man on whom so much depended.

If we wish to arrive at a correct judgment of Pitt's merits and defects, we must never forget that he belonged to a peculiar class of statesmen, and that he must be tried by a peculiar standard. It is not easy to compare him fairly with such men as Ximenes and Sully, Richelieu and Oxenstiern, John de Witt and Warren Hastings. The means by which those politicians governed great communities were of quite a different kind from those which Pitt was under the necessity of employing. Some talents, which they never had any opportunity of showing that they possessed, were developed in him to an extraordinary degree. In some qualities, on the other hand, to which they owe a large part of their fame, he was decidedly their inferior. They transacted business in their closets, or at boards where a few confidential councillors sat. It was his lot to be born in an age and in a country in which parliamentary government was completely established; his whole training from infancy was such as fitted him to bear a part in parliamentary government; and, from the prime of his manhood to his death, all the powers of his vigorous mind were almost constantly exerted in the work of parliamentary government. He accordingly became the greatest master of the whole art of parliamentary government that has ever existed, a greater than Montague or Walpole, a greater than his father Chatham or his rival Fox, a greater than either of his illustrious successors Canning and Peel.

Parliamentary government, like every other contrivance of man, has its advantages and its disadvantages. On the advantages there is no need to dilate. The history of England during the hundred and seventy years which have elapsed since the House of Commons became the most powerful body in the state, her immense and still growing prosperity, her freedom, her tranquillity, her greatness in arts, in sciences, and in arms, her maritime ascendency, the marvels of her public credit, her American, her African, her Australian, her Asiatic empires, sufficiently prove the excellence of her institutions. But those institutions, though excellent, are assuredly not perfect. Parliamentary government is government by speaking. In such a government, the power of speaking is the most highly prized of all the qualities which a politician can possess; and that power may exist, in the highest degree, without judgment, without fortitude, without skill in reading the characters of men or the signs of the times, without any knowledge of the principles of legislation or of political economy, and without any skill in diplomacy or in the administration of war. Nay, it may well happen that those very intellectual qualities which give a peculiar charm to the speeches of a public man may be incompatible with the qualities which would fit him to meet a pressing emergency with promptitude and firmness. It was thus with Charles Townshend. It was thus with Windham. It was a privilege to listen to those accomplished and ingenious orators. But in a perilous crisis they would have been found far inferior in all the qualities of rulers to such a man as Oliver Cromwell, who talked nonsense, or as William the Silent, who did not talk at all. When parliamentary government is established, a Charles Townshend or a Windham will almost always exercise much greater influence than such men as the great Protector of England, or as the founder of the Batavian commonwealth. In such a government, parliamentary talent, though quite distinct from the talents of a good executive or judicial officer, will be a chief qualification for executive and judicial office. From the Book of Dignities a curious list might be made out of Chancellors ignorant of the principles of equity, and First Lords of the Admiralty ignorant of the principles of navigation, of Colonial ministers who could not repeat the names of the Colonies, of Lords of the Treasury who did not know the difference between funded and unfunded debt, and of Secretaries of the India Board who did not know whether the Mahrattas were Mahometans or Hindoos. On these grounds, some persons, incapable of seeing more than one side of a question, have pronounced parliamentary government a positive evil, and have maintained that the administration would be greatly improved if the power, now exercised by a large assembly, were transferred to a single person. Men of sense will probably think the remedy very much worse than the disease, and will be of opinion that there would be small gain in exchanging Charles Townshend and Windham for the Prince of the Peace, or the poor slave and dog Steenie.

Pitt was emphatically the man of parliamentary government, the type of his class, the minion, the child, the spoiled child, of the House of Commons. For the House of Commons he had an hereditary, an infantine love. Through his whole boyhood, the House of Commons was never out of his thoughts, or out of the thoughts of his instructors. Reciting at his father's knee, reading Thucydides and Cicero into English, analyzing the great Attic speeches on the Embassy and on the Crown, he was constantly in training for the conflicts of the House of Commons. He was a distinguished member of the House of Commons at twenty-one. The ability which he had displayed in the House of Commons made him the most powerful subject in Europe before he was twenty-five. It would have been happy for himself and for his country if his elevation had been deferred. Eight or ten years, during which he would have had leisure and opportunity for reading and reflection, for foreign travel, for social intercourse and free exchange of thought on equal terms with a great variety of companions, would have supplied what, without any fault on his part, was wanting to his powerful intellect. He had all the knowledge that he could be expected to have; that is to say, all the knowledge that a man can acquire while he is a student at Cambridge, and all the knowledge that a man can acquire when he is First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. But the stock of general information which he brought from college, extraordinary for a boy, was far inferior to what Fox possessed, and beggarly when compared with the massy, the splendid, the various treasures laid up in the large mind of Burke. After Pitt became minister, he had no leisure to learn more than was necessary for the purposes of the day which was passing over him. What was necessary for those purposes such a man could learn with little difficulty. He was surrounded by experienced and able public servants. He could at any moment command their best assistance.

From the stores which they produced, his vigorous mind rapidly collected the materials for a good parliamentary case; and that was enough. Legislation and administration were with him secondary matters. To the work of framing statutes, of negotiating treaties, of organizing fleets and armies, of sending forth expeditions, he gave only the leavings of his time and the dregs of his fine intellect. The strength and sap of his mind were all drawn in a different direction. It was when the House of Commons was to be convinced and persuaded that he put forth all his powers.

Of those powers we must form our estimate chiefly from tradition; for of all the eminent speakers of the last age Pitt has suffered most from the reporters. Even while he was still living, critics remarked that his eloquence could not be preserved, that he must be heard to be appreciated. They more than once applied to him the sentence in which Tacitus describes the fate of a senator whose rhetoric was admired in the Augustan age: "Haterii canorum illud et profluens cum ipso simul exstinctum est." There is, however, abundant evidence that nature had bestowed on Pitt the talents of a great orator; and those talents had been developed in a very peculiar manner, first by his education, and secondly by the high official position to which he rose early, and in which he passed the greater part of his public life.

At his first appearance in Parliament he showed himself superior to all his contemporaries in command of language. He could pour forth a long succession of round and stately periods, without premeditation, without ever pausing for a word, without ever repeating a word, in a voice of silver clearness, and with a pronunciation so articulate that not a letter was slurred over. He had less aptitude of mind and less richness of imagination than Burke, less ingenuity than Windham, less wit than Sheridan, less perfect mastery of dialectical fence, and less of that highest sort of eloquence which consists of reason and passion fused together, than Fox. Yet the almost unanimous judgment of those who were in the habit of listening to that remarkable race of men placed Pitt, as a speaker, above Burke, above Windham, above Sheridan, and not below Fox. His declamation was copious, polished, and splendid. In power of sarcasm he was probably not surpassed by any speaker, ancient or modern; and of this formidable weapon he made merciless use. In two parts of the oratorical art which are of the highest value to a minister of state he was singularly expert. No man knew better how to be luminous or how to be obscure. When he wished to be understood, he never failed to make himself understood. He could with ease present to his audience, not perhaps an exact or profound, but a clear, popular, and plausible view of the most extensive and complicated subject. Nothing was out of place; nothing was forgotten; minute details, dates, sums of money, were all faithfully preserved in his memory. Even intricate questions of finance, when explained by him, seemed clear to the plainest man among his hearers. On the other hand, when he did not wish to be explicit, — and no man who is at the head of affairs always wishes to be explicit, — he had a marvellous power of saying nothing in language which left on his audience the impression that he had said a great deal. He was at once the only man who could open a budget without notes, and the only man who, as Windham said, could speak that most elaborately evasive and unmeaning of human compositions, a King's speech, without premeditation.

The effect of oratory will always to a great extent depend on the character of the orator. There perhaps never were two speakers whose eloquence had more of what may be called the race, more of the flavor imparted by moral qualities, than Fox and Pitt. The speeches of Fox owe a great part of their charm to that warmth and softness of heart, that sympathy with human suffering, that admiration for everything great and beautiful, and that hatred of cruelty and injustice, which interest and delight us even in the most defective reports. No person, on the other hand, could hear Pitt without perceiving him to be a man of high, intrepid, and commanding spirit, proudly conscious of his own rectitude and of his own intellectual superiority, incapable of the low vices of fear and envy, but too prone to feel and to show disdain. Pride, indeed, pervaded the whole man, was written in the harsh, rigid lines of his face, was marked by the way in which he walked, in which he sat, in which he stood, and, above all, in which he bowed. Such pride, of course, inflicted many wounds. It may confidently be affirmed that there cannot be found, in all the ten thousand invectives written against Fox, a word indicating that his demeanor had ever made a single personal enemy. On the other hand, several men of note who had been partial to Pitt, and who to the last continued to approve his public conduct and to support his administration, — Cumberland, for example, Boswell, and Matthias, — were so much irritated by the contempt with which he treated them that they complained in print of their wrongs. But his pride, though it made him bitterly disliked by individuals, inspired the great body of his followers in Parliament and throughout the country with respect and confidence. They took him at his own valuation. They saw that his self-esteem was not that of an upstart, who was drunk with good luck and with applause, and who, if fortune turned, would sink from arrogance into abject humility. It was that of the magnanimous man so finely described by Aristotle in the Ethics, of the man who thinks himself worthy of great things, being in truth worthy. It sprang from a consciousness of great powers and great virtues, and was never so conspicuously displayed as in the midst of difficulties and dangers which would have unnerved and bowed down any ordinary mind. It was closely connected, too, with an ambition which had no mixture of low cupidity. There was something noble in the cynical disdain with which the mighty minister scattered riches and titles to right and left among those who valued them, while he spurned them out of his own way. Poor himself, he was surrounded by friends on whom he had bestowed three thousand, six thousand, ten thousand a year. Plain Mister himself, he had made more lords than any three ministers that had preceded him. The garter, for which the first dukes in the kingdom were contending, was repeatedly offered to him, and offered in vain.

The correctness of his private life added much to the dignity of his public character. In the relations of son, brother, uncle, master, friend, his conduct was exemplary. In the small circle of his intimate associates, he was amiable, affectionate, even playful. They loved him sincerely; they regretted him long; and they would hardly admit that he who was so kind and gentle with them could be stern and haughty with others. He indulged, indeed, somewhat too freely in wine, which he had early been directed to take as a medicine, and which use had made a necessary of life to him. But it was very seldom that any indication of undue excess could be detected in his tones or gestures; and, in truth, two bottles of port were little more to him than two dishes of tea. He had, when he was first introduced into the clubs of St. James's Street, shown a strong taste for play; but he had the prudence and the resolution to stop before this taste had acquired the strength of habit. From the passion which generally exercises the most tyrannical dominion over the young he possessed an immunity, which is probably to be ascribed partly to his temperament and partly to his situation. His constitution was feeble; he was very shy; and he was very busy. The strictness of his morals furnished such buffoons as Peter Pindar and Captain Morris with an inexhaustible theme for merriment of no very delicate kind. But the great body of the middle class of Englishmen could not see the joke.

They warmly praised the young statesman for commanding his passions, and for covering his frailties, if he had frailties, with decorous obscurity, and would have been very far indeed from thinking better of him if he had vindicated himself from the taunts of his enemies by taking under his protection a Nancy Parsons or a Marianne Clark.

No part of the immense popularity which Pitt long enjoyed is to be attributed to the eulogies of wits and poets. It might have been naturally expected that a man of genius, of learning, of taste, an orator whose diction was often compared to that of Tully, the representative, too, of a great university, would have taken a peculiar pleasure in befriending eminent writers, to whatever political party they might have belonged. The love of literature had induced Augustus to heap benefits on Pompeians, Somers to be the protector of nonjurors, Harley to make the fortunes of Whigs. But it could not move Pitt to show any favor even to Pittites. He was doubtless right in thinking that, in general, poetry, history, and philosophy ought to be suffered, like calico and cutlery, to find their proper price in the market, and that to teach men of letters to look habitually to the state for their recompense is bad for the state and bad for letters. Assuredly nothing can be more absurd or mischievous than to waste the public money in bounties for the purpose of inducing people who ought to be weighing out grocery or measuring out drapery to write bad or middling books. But, though the sound rule is that authors should be left to be remunerated by their readers, there will, in every generation, be a few exceptions to this rule. To distinguish these special cases from the mass is an employment well worthy of the faculties of a great and accomplished ruler; and Pitt would assuredly have had little difficulty in finding such cases. While he was in power, the greatest philologist of the age, his own contemporary at Cambridge, was reduced to earn a livelihood by the lowest literary drudgery, and to spend in writing squibs for the Morning Chronicle years to which we might have owed an all but perfect text of the whole tragic and comic drama of Athens. The greatest historian of the age, forced by poverty to leave his country, completed his immortal work on the shores of Lake Leman. The political heterodoxy of Porson, and the religious heterodoxy of Gibbon, may perhaps be pleaded in defence of the minister by whom those eminent men were neglected. But there were other cases in which no such excuse could be set up. Scarcely had Pitt obtained possession of unbounded power when an aged writer of the highest eminence, who had made very little by his writings, and who was sinking into the grave under a load of infirmities and sorrows, wanted five or six hundred pounds to enable him, during the winter or two which might still remain to him, to draw his breath more easily in the soft climate of Italy. Not a farthing was to be obtained; and before Christmas the author of the English Dictionary and of the Lives of the Poets had gasped his last in the river fog and coal smoke of Fleet Street. A few months after the death of Johnson appeared the Task, incomparably the best poem that any Englishman then living had produced, — a poem, too, which could hardly fail to excite in a well-constituted mind a feeling of esteem and compassion for the poet, a man of genius and virtue, whose means were scanty, and whom the most cruel of all the calamities incident to humanity had made incapable of supporting himself by vigorous and sustained exertion. Nowhere had Chatham been praised with more enthusiasm, or in verse more worthy of the subject, than in the Task. The son of Chatham, however, contented himself with reading and admiring the book, and left the author to starve. The pension which, long after, enabled poor Cowper to close his melancholy life, unmolested by duns and bailiffs, was obtained for him by the strenuous kindness of Lord Spencer. What a contrast between the way in which Pitt acted towards Johnson and the way in which Lord Grey acted towards his political enemy Scott, when Scott, worn out by misfortune and disease, was advised to try the effect of the Italian air! What a contrast between the way in which Pitt acted towards Cowper and the way in which Burke, a poor man and out of place, acted towards Crabbe! Even Dundas, who made no pretensions to literary taste, and was content to be considered as a hard-headed and somewhat coarse man of business, was, when compared with his eloquent and classically educated friend, a Mæcenas or a Leo. Dundas made Burns an exciseman, with seventy pounds a year; and this was more than Pitt, during his long tenure of power, did for the encouragement of letters. Even those who may think that it is, in general, no part of the duty of a government to reward literary merit will hardly deny that a government, which has much lucrative church preferment in its gift, is bound, in distributing that preferment, not to overlook divines whose writings have rendered great service to the cause of religion. But it seems never to have occurred to Pitt that he lay under any such obligation. All the theological works of all the numerous bishops whom he made and translated are not, when put together, worth fifty pages of the Horæ Paulinæ, of the Natural Theology, or of the View of the Evidences of Christianity. But on Paley the all-powerful minister never bestowed the smallest benefice. Artists Pitt treated as contemptuously as writers. For painting he did simply nothing. Sculptors, who had been selected to execute monuments voted by Parliament, had to haunt the antechambers of the Treasury during many years before they could obtain a farthing from him. One of them, after vainly soliciting the minister for payment during fourteen years, had the courage to present a memorial to the King, and thus obtained tardy and ungracious justice. Architects it was absolutely necessary to employ; and the worst that could be found seem to have been employed. Not a single fine public building of any kind or in any style was erected during his long administration. It may be confidently affirmed that no ruler whose abilities and attainments would bear any comparison with his has ever shown such cold disdain for what is excellent in arts and letters.

His first administration lasted seventeen years. That long period is divided by a strongly marked line into two almost exactly equal parts. The first part ended and the second began in the autumn of 1792. Throughout both parts Pitt displayed in the highest degree the talents of a parliamentary leader. During the first part he was a fortunate and, in many respects, a skilful administrator. With the difficulties which he had to encounter during the second part he was altogether incapable of contending; but his eloquence and his perfect mastery of the tactics of the House of Commons concealed his incapacity from the multitude.

The eight years which followed the general election of 1784 were as tranquil and prosperous as any eight years in the whole history of England. Neighboring nations which had lately been in arms against her, and which had flattered themselves that, in losing her American colonies, she had lost a chief source of her wealth and of her power, saw, with wonder and vexation, that she was more wealthy and more powerful than ever. Her trade increased. Her manufactures flourished. Her exchequer was full to overflowing. Very idle apprehensions were generally entertained that the public debt, though much less than a third of the debt which we now bear with ease, would be found too heavy for the strength of the nation. Those apprehensions might not perhaps have been easily quieted by reason. But Pitt quieted them by a juggle. He succeeded in persuading first himself, and then the whole nation, his opponents included, that a new sinking fund, which, so far as it differed from former sinking funds, differed for the worse, would, by virtue of some mysterious power of propagation belonging to money, put into the pocket of the public creditor great sums not taken out of the pocket of the taxpayer. The country, terrified by a danger which was no danger, hailed with delight and boundless confidence a remedy which was no remedy. The minister was almost universally extolled as the greatest of financiers. Meanwhile both the branches of the House of Bourbon found that England was as formidable an antagonist as she had ever been. France had formed a plan for reducing Holland to vassalage. But England interposed; and France receded. Spain interrupted by violence the trade of our merchants with the regions near the Oregon. But England armed; and Spain receded. Within the island there was profound tranquillity. The King was, for the first time, popular. During the twenty-three years which had followed his accession he had not been loved by his subjects. His domestic virtues were acknowledged. But it was generally thought that the good qualities by which he was distinguished in private life were wanting to his political character. As a Sovereign, he was resentful, unforgiving, stubborn, cunning. Under his rule the country had sustained cruel disgraces and disasters; and every one of those disgraces and disasters was imputed to his strong antipathies, and to his perverse obstinacy in the wrong. One statesman after another complained that he had been induced by royal caresses, entreaties, and promises, to undertake the direction of affairs at a difficult conjuncture, and that, as soon as he had, not without sullying his fame and alienating his best friends, served the turn for which he was wanted, his ungrateful master began to intrigue against him, and to canvass against him. Grenville, Rockingham, Chatham, men of widely different characters, but all three upright and high-spirited, agreed in thinking that the Prince under whom they had successively held the highest place in the government was one of the most insincere of mankind. His confidence was reposed, they said, not in those known and responsible counsellors to whom he had delivered the seals of office, but in secret advisers who stole up the back stairs into his closet. In Parliament, his ministers, while defending themselves against the attacks of the Opposition in front, were perpetually, at his instigation, assailed on the flank or in the rear by a vile band of mercenaries who called themselves his friends. These men constantly, while in possession of lucrative places in his service, spoke and voted against bills which he had authorized the First Lord of the Treasury or the Secretary of State to bring in. But from the day on which Pitt was placed at the head of affairs there was an end of secret influence. His haughty and aspiring spirit was not to be satisfied with the mere show of power. Any attempt to undermine him at Court, any mutinous movement among his followers in the House of Commons, was certain to be at once put down. He had only to tender his resignation; and he could dictate his own terms. For he, and he alone, stood between the King and the Coalition. He was therefore little less than Mayor of the Palace. The nation loudly applauded the King for having the wisdom to repose entire confidence in so excellent a minister. His Majesty's private virtues now began to produce their full effect. He was generally regarded as the model of a respectable country gentleman, honest, good-natured, sober, religious. He rose early; he dined temperately; he was strictly faithful to his wife; he never missed church; and at church he never missed a response. His people heartily prayed that he might long reign over them; and they prayed the more heartily because his virtues were set off to the best advantage by the vices and follies of the Prince of Wales, who lived in close intimacy with the chiefs of the Opposition.

How strong this feeling was in the public mind appeared singularly on one great occasion. In the autumn of 1788 the King became insane. The Opposition, eager for office, committed the great indiscretion of asserting that the heir apparent had, by the fundamental laws of

England, a right to be Regent with the full powers of royalty. Pitt, on the other hand, maintained it to be the constitutional doctrine that, when a Sovereign is, by reason of infancy, disease, or absence, incapable of exercising the regal functions, it belongs to the Estates of the Realm to determine who shall be the vicegerent, and with what portion of the executive authority such vicegerent shall be entrusted. A long and violent contest followed, in which Pitt was supported by the great body of the people with as much enthusiasm as during the first months of his administration. Tories with one voice applauded him for defending the sickbed of a virtuous and unhappy Sovereign against a disloyal faction and an undutiful son. Not a few Whigs applauded him for asserting the authority of Parliaments and the principles of the Revolution, in opposition to a doctrine which seemed to have too much affinity with the servile theory of indefeasible hereditary right. The middle class, always zealous on the side of decency and the domestic virtues, looked forward with dismay to a reign resembling that of Charles the Second. The palace, which had now been, during thirty years, the pattern of an English home, would be a public nuisance, a school of profligacy. To the good King's repast of mutton and lemonade, dispatched at three o'clock, would succeed midnight banquets, from which the guests would be carried home speechless. To the backgammon board at which the good King played for a little silver with his equerries, would succeed faro tables from which young patricians who had sat down rich would rise up beggars. The drawing-room, from which the frown of the Queen had repelled a whole generation of frail beauties, would now be again what it had been in the days of Barbara Palmer and Louisa de Querouaille. Nay, severely as the public reprobated the Prince's many illicit attachments, his one virtuous attachment was reprobated more severely still. Even in grave and pious circles his Protestant mistresses gave less scandal than his Popish wife. That he must be Regent nobody ventured to deny. But he and his friends were so unpopular that Pitt could, with general approbation, propose to limit the powers of the Regent by restrictions to which it would have been impossible to subject a Prince beloved and trusted by the country. Some interested men, fully expecting a change of administration, went over to the Opposition. But the majority, purified by these desertions, closed its ranks, and presented a more firm array than ever to the enemy. In every division Pitt was victorious. When at length, after a stormy interregnum of three months, it was announced, on the very eve of the inauguration of the Regent, that the King was himself again, the nation was wild with delight. On the evening of the day on which his Majesty resumed his functions, a spontaneous illumination, the most general that had ever been seen in England, brightened the whole vast space from Highgate to Tooting, and from Hammersmith to Greenwich. On the day on which he returned thanks in the cathedral of his capital, all the horses and carriages within a hundred miles of London were too few for the multitudes which flocked to see him pass through the streets. A second illumination followed, which was even superior to the first in magnificence. Pitt with difficulty escaped from the tumultuous kindness of an innumerable multitude which insisted on drawing his coach from St. Paul's Churchyard to Downing Street. This was the moment at which his fame and fortune may be said to have reached the zenith. His influence in the closet was as great as that of Carr or Villiers had been. His dominion over the Parliament was more absolute than that of Walpole or Pelham had been. He was at the same time as high in the favor of the populace as ever Wilkes or Sacheverell had been. Nothing did more to raise his character than his noble poverty. It was well known that if he had been dismissed from office after more than five years of boundless power, he would hardly have carried out with him a sum sufficient to furnish the set of chambers in which, as he cheerfully declared, he meant to resume the practice of the law. His admirers, however, were by no means disposed to suffer him to depend on daily toil for his daily bread. The voluntary contributions which were awaiting his acceptance in the city of London alone would have sufficed to make him a rich man. But it may be doubted whether his haughty spirit would have stooped to accept a provision so honorably earned and so honorably bestowed.

To such a height of power and glory had this extraordinary man risen at twenty-nine years of age. And now the tide was on the turn. Only ten days after the triumphant procession to St. Paul's, the States-General of France, after an interval of a hundred and seventy-four years, met at Versailles.

The nature of the great Revolution which followed was long very imperfectly understood in this country. Burke saw much further than any of his contemporaries; but whatever his sagacity descried was refracted and discolored by his passions and his imagination. More than three years elapsed before the principles of the English administration underwent any material change. Nothing could as yet be milder or more strictly constitutional than the minister's domestic policy. Not a single act indicating an arbitrary temper or a jealousy of the people could be imputed to him. He had never applied to Parliament for any extraordinary powers. He had never used with harshness the ordinary powers entrusted by the constitution to the executive government. Not a single state prosecution which would even now be called oppressive had been instituted by him. Indeed, the only oppressive state prosecution instituted during the first eight years of his administration was that of Stockdale, which is to be attributed, not to the government, but to the chiefs of the Opposition. In office, Pitt had redeemed the pledges which he had, at his entrance into public life, given to the supporters of parliamentary reform. He had, in 1785, brought forward a judicious plan for the improvement of the representative system, and had prevailed on the King, not only to refrain from talking against that plan, but to recommend it to the Houses in a speech from the throne.[1] This attempt failed; but there can be little doubt that, if the French Revolution had not produced a violent reaction of public feeling, Pitt would have performed, with little difficulty and no danger, that great work which, at a later period, Lord Grey could accomplish only by means which for a time loosened the very foundations of the commonwealth. When the atrocities of the slave trade were first brought under the consideration of Parliament, no abolitionist was more zealous than Pitt. When sickness prevented Wilberforce from appearing in public, his place was most efficiently supplied by his friend the minister. A humane bill, which mitigated the horrors of the middle passage, was, in 1788, carried by the eloquence and determined spirit of Pitt, in spite of the opposition of some of his own colleagues; and it ought always to be remembered to his honor that, in order to carry that bill, he kept the Houses sitting, in spite of many murmurs, long after the business of the government had been done and the Appropriation Act passed. In 1791 he cordially concurred with Fox in maintaining the sound constitutional doctrine that an impeachment is not terminated by a dissolution. In the course of the same year the two great rivals contended side by side in a far more important cause. They are fairly entitled to divide the high honor of having added to our statute-book the inestimable law which places the liberty of the press under the protection of juries. On one occasion, and one alone, Pitt, during the first half of his long administration, acted in a manner unworthy of an enlightened Whig. In the debate on the Test Act, he stooped to gratify the master whom he served, the university which he represented, and the great body of clergymen and country gentlemen on whose support he rested, by talking, with little heartiness, indeed, and with no asperity, the language of a Tory. With this single exception, his conduct from the end of 1783 to the middle of 1792 was that of an honest friend of civil and religious liberty.

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[1] The speech with which the King opened the session of 1785 concluded with an assurance that his Majesty would heartily concur in every measure which could tend to secure the true principles of the constitution. These words were at the time understood to refer to Pitt's Reform Bill.

Nor did anything during that period indicate that he loved war, or harbored any malevolent feeling against any neighboring nation. Those French writers who have represented him as a Hannibal sworn in childhood by his father to bear eternal hatred to France, as having, by mysterious intrigues and lavish bribes, instigated the leading Jacobins to commit those excesses which dishonored the Revolution, as having been the real author of the first coalition, know nothing of his character or of his history. So far was he from being a deadly enemy to France, that his laudable attempts to bring about a closer connection with that country by means of a wise and liberal treaty of commerce brought on him the severe censure of the Opposition. He was told in the House of Commons that he was a degenerate son, and that his partiality for the hereditary foes of our island was enough to make his great father's bones stir under the pavement of the Abbey.

And this man, whose name, if he had been so fortunate as to die in 1792, would now have been associated with peace, with freedom, with philanthropy, with temperate reform, with mild and constitutional administration, lived to associate his name with arbitrary government, with harsh laws harshly executed, with alien bills, with gagging bills, with suspensions of the Habeas Corpus Act, with cruel punishments inflicted on some political agitators, with unjustifiable prosecutions instituted against others, and with the most costly and most sanguinary wars of modern times. He lived to be held up to obloquy as the stern oppressor of England and the indefatigable disturber of Europe. Poets, contrasting his earlier with his later years, likened him sometimes to the apostle who kissed in order to betray, and sometimes to the evil angels who kept not their first estate. A satirist of great genius introduced the fiends of Famine, Slaughter, and Fire, proclaiming that they had received their commission from One whose name was formed of four letters, and promising to give their employer ample proofs of gratitude. Famine would gnaw the multitude till they should rise up against him in madness. The demon of Slaughter would impel them to tear him limb from limb. But Fire boasted that she alone could reward him as he deserved, and that she would cling round him to all eternity. By the French press and the French tribune every crime that disgraced and every calamity that afflicted France was ascribed to the monster Pitt and his guineas. While the Jacobins were dominant, it was he who had corrupted the Gironde, who had raised Lyons and Bordeaux against the Convention, who had suborned Paris to assassinate Lepelletier, and Cecilia Regnault to assassinate Robespierre. When the Thermidorian reaction came, all the atrocities of the Reign of Terror were imputed to him. Collot D'Herbois and Fouquier Tinville had been his pensioners. It was he who had hired the murderers of September, who had dictated the pamphlets of Marat and the Carmagnoles of Barère, who had paid Lebon to deluge Arras with blood, and Carrier to choke the Loire with corpses.

The truth is, that he liked neither war nor arbitrary government. He was a lover of peace and freedom, driven, by a stress against which it was hardly possible for any will or any intellect to struggle, out of the course to which his inclinations pointed, and for which his abilities and acquirements fitted him, and forced into a policy repugnant to his feelings and unsuited to his talents.

The charge of apostasy is grossly unjust. A man ought no more to be called an apostate because his opinions alter with the opinions of the great body of his contemporaries than he ought to be called an Oriental traveller because he is always going round from west to east with the globe and everything that is upon it. Between the spring of 1789 and the close of 1792, the public mind of England underwent a great change. If the change of Pitt's sentiments attracted peculiar notice, it was not because he changed more than his neighbors; for in fact he changed less than most of them; but because his position was far more conspicuous than theirs, because he was, till Bonaparte appeared, the individual who filled the greatest space in the eyes of the inhabitants of the civilized world. During a short time the nation, and Pitt, as one of the nation, looked with interest and approbation on the French Revolution. But soon vast confiscations, the violent sweeping away of ancient institutions, the domination of clubs, the barbarities of mobs maddened by famine and hatred, produced a reaction here. The court, the nobility, the gentry, the clergy, the manufacturers, the merchants, in short, nineteen twentieths of those who had good roofs over their heads and good coats on their backs, became eager and intolerant Anti-Jacobins. This feeling was at least as strong among the minister's adversaries as among his supporters. Fox in vain attempted to restrain his followers. All his genius, all his vast personal influence, could not prevent them from rising up against him in general mutiny. Burke set the example of revolt; and Burke was in no long time joined by Portland, Spencer, Fitzwilliam, Loughborough, Carlisle, Malmesbury, Windham, Elliot. In the House of Commons, the followers of the great Whig statesman and orator diminished from about a hundred and sixty to fifty. In the House of Lords he had but ten or twelve adherents left. There can be no doubt that there would have been a similar mutiny on the ministerial benches if Pitt had obstinately resisted the general wish. Pressed at once by his master and by his colleagues, by old friends and by old opponents, he abandoned, slowly and reluctantly, the policy which was dear to his heart. He labored hard to avert the European war. When the European war broke out, he still flattered himself that it would not be necessary for this country to take either side. In the spring of 1792 he congratulated the Parliament on the prospect of long and profound peace, and proved his sincerity by proposing large remissions of taxation. Down to the end of that year he continued to cherish the hope that England might be able to preserve neutrality. But the passions which raged on both sides of the Channel were not to be restrained. The republicans who ruled France were inflamed by a fanaticism resembling that of the Mussulmans who, with the Koran in one hand and the sword in the other, went forth conquering and converting, eastward to the Bay of Bengal, and westward to the Pillars of Hercules. The higher and middle classes of England were animated by zeal not less fiery than that of the Crusaders who raised the cry of "Deus vult" at Clermont. The impulse which drove the two nations to a collision was not to be arrested by the abilities or by the authority of any single man. As Pitt was in front of his fellows, and towered high above them, he seemed to lead them. But in fact he was violently pushed on by them, and, had he held back but a little more than he did, would have been thrust out of their way or trampled under their feet.

He yielded to the current; and from that day his misfortunes began. The truth is that there were only two consistent courses before him. Since he did not choose to oppose himself, side by side with Fox, to the public feeling, he should have taken the advice of Burke, and should have availed himself of that feeling to the full extent. If it was impossible to preserve peace, he should have adopted the only policy which could lead to victory. He should have proclaimed a Holy War for religion, morality, property, order, public law, and should have thus opposed to the Jacobins an energy equal to their own. Unhappily he tried to find a middle path; and he found one which united all that was worst in both extremes. He went to war; but he would not understand the peculiar character of that war. He was obstinately blind to the plain fact that he was contending against a state which was also a sect, and that the new quarrel between England and France was of quite a different kind from the old quarrels about colonies in America and fortresses in the Netherlands. He had to combat frantic enthusiasm, boundless ambition, restless activity, the wildest and most audacious spirit of innovation; and he acted as if he had to deal with the harlots and fops of the old Court of Versailles, with Madame de Pompadour and the Abbé de Bernis. It was pitiable to hear him, year after year, proving to an admiring audience that the wicked Republic was exhausted, that she could not hold out, that her credit was gone, and her assignats were not worth more than the paper of which they were made; as if credit was necessary to a government of which the principle was rapine, as if Alboin could not turn Italy into a desert till he had negotiated a loan at five per cent, as if the exchequer bills of Attila had been at par. It was impossible that a man who so completely mistook the nature of a contest could carry on that contest successfully. Great as Pitt's abilities were, his military administration was that of a driveller. He was at the head of a nation engaged in a struggle for life and death, of a nation eminently distinguished by all the physical and all the moral qualities which make excellent soldiers. The resources at his command were unlimited. The Parliament was even more ready to grant him men and money than he was to ask for them. In such an emergency, and with such means, such a statesman as Richelieu, as Louvois, as Chatham, as Wellesley, would have created in a few months one of the finest armies in the world, and would soon have discovered and brought forward generals worthy to command such an army. Germany might have been saved by another Blenheim; Flanders recovered by another Ramilies; another Poitiers might have delivered the Royalist and Catholic provinces of France from a yoke which they abhorred, and might have spread terror even to the barriers of Paris. But the fact is that, after eight years of war, after a vast destruction of life, after an expenditure of wealth far exceeding the expenditure of the American war, of the Seven Years' war, of the war of the Austrian Succession, and of the war of the Spanish Succession, united, the English army, under Pitt, was the laughing-stock of all Europe. It could not boast of one single brilliant exploit. It had never shown itself on the Continent but to be beaten, chased, forced to reëmbark, or forced to capitulate. To take some sugar island in the West Indies, to scatter some mob of half-naked Irish peasants, — such were the most splendid victories won by the British troops under Pitt's auspices.

The English navy no mismanagement could ruin. But during a long period whatever mismanagement could do was done. The Earl of Chatham, without a single qualification for high public trust, was made, by fraternal partiality, First Lord of the Admiralty, and was kept in that great post during two years of a war in which the very existence of the state depended on the efficiency of the fleet. He continued to doze away and trifle away the time which ought to have been devoted to the public service, till the whole mercantile body, though generally disposed to support the government, complained bitterly that our flag gave no protection to our trade. Fortunately he was succeeded by George, Earl Spencer, one of those chiefs of the Whig party who, in the great schism caused by the French Revolution, had followed Burke. Lord Spencer, though inferior to many of his colleagues as an orator, was decidedly the best administrator among them. To him it was owing that a long and gloomy succession of days of fasting, and, most emphatically, of humiliation, was interrupted, twice in the short space of eleven months, by days of thanksgiving for great victories.

It may seem paradoxical to say that the incapacity which Pitt showed in all that related to the conduct of the war is, in some sense, the most decisive proof that he was a man of very extraordinary abilities. Yet this is the simple truth. For assuredly one tenth part of his errors and disasters would have been fatal to the power and influence of any minister who had not possessed, in the highest degree, the talents of a parliamentary leader. While his schemes were confounded, while his predictions were falsified, while the coalitions which he had labored to form were falling to pieces, while the expeditions which he had sent forth at enormous cost were ending in rout and disgrace, while the enemy against whom he was feebly contending was subjugating Flanders and Brabant, the Electorate of Mentz, and the Electorate of Treves, Holland, Piedmont, Liguria, Lombardy, his authority over the House of Commons was constantly becoming more and more absolute. There was his empire. There were his victories, his Lodi and his Arcola, his Rivoli and his Marengo. If some great misfortune, a pitched battle lost by the allies, the annexation of a new department to the French Republic, a sanguinary insurrection in Ireland, a mutiny in the fleet, a panic in the city, a run on the bank, had spread dismay through the ranks of his majority, that dismay lasted only till he rose from the Treasury bench, drew up his haughty head, stretched his arm with commanding gesture, and poured forth, in deep and sonorous tones, the lofty language of inextinguishable hope and inflexible resolution. Thus, through a long and calamitous period, every disaster that happened without the walls of Parliament was regularly followed by a triumph within them. At length he had no longer an opposition to encounter. Of the great party which had contended against him during the first eight years of his administration more than one half now marched under his standard, with his old competitor the Duke of Portland at their head; and the rest had, after many vain struggles, quitted the field in despair. Fox had retired to the shades of St. Anne's Hill, and had there found, in the society of friends whom no vicissitude could estrange from him, of a woman whom he tenderly loved, and of the illustrious dead of Athens, of Rome, and of Florence, ample compensation for all the misfortunes of his public life. Session followed session with scarcely a single division. In the eventful year 1799, the largest minority that could be mustered against the government was twenty-five.

In Pitt's domestic policy there was at this time assuredly no want of vigor. While he offered to French Jacobinism a resistance so feeble that it only encouraged the evil which he wished to suppress, he put down English Jacobinism with a strong hand. The Habeas Corpus Act was repeatedly suspended. Public meetings were placed under severe restraints. The government obtained from Parliament power to send out of the country aliens who were suspected of evil designs; and that power was not suffered to be idle. Writers who propounded doctrines adverse to monarchy and aristocracy were proscribed and punished without mercy. It was hardly safe for a republican to avow his political creed over his beefsteak and his bottle of port at a chop-house. The old laws of Scotland against sedition — laws which were considered by Englishmen as barbarous, and which a succession of governments had suffered to rust — were now furbished up and sharpened anew. Men of cultivated minds and polished manners were, for offences which at Westminster would have been treated as mere misdemeanors, sent to herd with felons at Botany Bay. Some reformers, whose opinions were extravagant and whose language was intemperate, but who had never dreamed of subverting the government by physical force, were indicted for high treason, and were saved from the gallows only by the righteous verdicts of juries. This severity was at the time loudly applauded by alarmists whom fear had made cruel, but will be seen in a very different light by posterity. The truth is, that the Englishmen who wished for a revolution were, even in number, not formidable, and, in everything but number, a faction utterly contemptible, without arms, or funds, or plans, or organization, or leader. There can be no doubt that Pitt, strong as he was in the support of the great body of the nation, might easily have repressed the turbulence of the discontented minority by firmly yet temperately enforcing the ordinary law. Whatever vigor he showed during this unfortunate part of his life was vigor out of place and season. He was all feebleness and languor in his conflict with the foreign enemy who was really to be dreaded, and reserved all his energy and resolution for the domestic enemy who might safely have been despised.

One part only of Pitt's conduct during the last eight years of the eighteenth century deserves high praise. He was the first English minister who formed great designs for the benefit of Ireland. The manner in which the Roman Catholic population of that unfortunate country had been kept down during many generations seemed to him unjust and cruel; and it was scarcely possible for a man of his abilities not to perceive that, in a contest against the Jacobins, the Roman Catholics were his natural allies. Had he been able to do all that he wished, it is probable that a wise and liberal policy would have averted the rebellion of 1798. But the difficulties which he encountered were great, perhaps insurmountable; and the Roman Catholics were, rather by his misfortune than by his fault, thrown into the hands of the Jacobins. There was a third great rising of the Irishry against the Englishry, a rising not less formidable than the risings of 1641 and 1689. The Englishry remained victorious; and it was necessary for Pitt, as it had been necessary for Oliver Cromwell and William of Orange before him, to consider how the victory should be used. It is only just to his memory to say that he formed a scheme of policy so grand and so simple, so righteous and so humane, that it would alone entitle him to a high place among statesmen. He determined to make Ireland one kingdom with England, and at the same time to relieve the Roman Catholic laity from civil disabilities, and to grant a public maintenance to the Roman Catholic clergy. Had he been able to carry these noble designs into effect, the Union would have been a Union indeed. It would have been inseparably associated in the minds of the great majority of Irishmen with civil and religious freedom; and the old Parliament in College Green would have been regretted only by a small knot of discarded jobbers and oppressors, and would have been remembered by the body of the nation with the loathing and contempt due to the most tyrannical and the most corrupt assembly that had ever sat in Europe. But Pitt could execute only one half of what he had projected. He succeeded in obtaining the consent of the Parliaments of both kingdoms to the Union; but that reconciliation of races and sects, without which the Union could exist only in name, was not accomplished. He was well aware that he was likely to find difficulties in the closet. But he flattered himself that, by cautious and dexterous management, those difficulties might be overcome. Unhappily, there were traitors and sycophants in high place who did not suffer him to take his own time and his own way, but prematurely disclosed his scheme to the King, and disclosed it in the manner most likely to irritate and alarm a weak and diseased mind. His Majesty absurdly imagined that his Coronation oath bound him to refuse his assent to any bill for relieving Roman

Catholics from civil disabilities. To argue with him was impossible. Dundas tried to explain the matter, but was told to keep his Scotch metaphysics to himself. Pitt, and Pitt's ablest colleagues, resigned their offices. It was necessary that the King should make a new arrangement. But by this time his anger and distress had brought back the malady which had, many years before, incapacitated him for the discharge of his functions. He actually assembled his family, read the Coronation oath to them, and told them that, if he broke it, the Crown would immediately pass to the House of Savoy. It was not until after an interregnum of several weeks that he regained the full use of his small faculties, and that a ministry after his own heart was at length formed.

The materials out of which he had to construct a government were neither solid nor splendid. To that party, weak in numbers, but strong in every kind of talent, which was hostile to the domestic and foreign policy of his late advisers, he could not have recourse. For that party, while it differed from his late advisers on every point on which they had been honored with his approbation, cordially agreed with them as to the single matter which had brought on them his displeasure. All that was left to him was to call up the rear ranks of the old ministry to form the front rank of a new ministry. In an age preëminently fruitful of parliamentary talents, a cabinet was formed containing hardly a single man who, in parliamentary talents, could be considered as even of the second rate. The most important offices in the state were bestowed on decorous and laborious mediocrity. Henry Addington was at the head of the Treasury. He had been an early, indeed a hereditary, friend of Pitt, and had by Pitt's influence been placed, while still a young man, in the chair of the House of Commons. He was universally admitted to have been the best speaker that had sat in that chair since the retirement of Onslow. But nature had not bestowed on him very vigorous faculties; and the highly respectable situation which he had long occupied with honor had rather unfitted than fitted him for the discharge of his new duties. His business had been to bear himself evenly between contending factions. He had taken no part in the war of words; and he had always been addressed with marked deference by the great orators who thundered against each other from his right and from his left. It was not strange that when, for the first time, he had to encounter keen and vigorous antagonists, who dealt hard blows without the smallest ceremony, he should have been awkward and unready, or that the air of dignity and authority which he had acquired in his former post, and of which he had not divested himself, should have made his helplessness laughable and pitiable. Nevertheless, during many months, his power seemed to stand firm. He was a favorite with the King, whom he resembled in narrowness of mind, and to whom he was more obsequious than Pitt had ever been. The nation was put into high good humor by a peace with France. The enthusiasm with which the upper and middle classes had rushed into the war had spent itself. Jacobinism was no longer formidable. Everywhere there was a strong reaction against what was called the atheistical and anarchical philosophy of the eighteenth century. Bonaparte, now First Consul, was busied in constructing out of the ruins of old institutions a new ecclesiastical establishment and a new order of knighthood. That nothing less than the dominion of the whole civilized world would satisfy his selfish ambition was not yet suspected; nor did even wise men see any reason to doubt that he might be as safe a neighbor as any prince of the House of Bourbon had been. The treaty of Amiens was therefore hailed by the great body of the English people with extravagant joy. The popularity of the minister was for the moment immense. His want of parliamentary ability was, as yet, of little consequence; for he had scarcely any adversary to encounter. The old opposition, delighted by the peace, regarded him with favor. A new opposition had indeed been formed by some of the late ministers, and was led by Grenville in the House of Lords, and by Windham in the House of Commons. But the new opposition could scarcely muster ten votes, and was regarded with no favor by the country. On Pitt the ministers relied as on their firmest support. He had not, like some of his colleagues, retired in anger. He had expressed the greatest respect for the conscientious scruple which had taken possession of the royal mind; and he had promised his successors all the help in his power. In private his advice was at their service. In Parliament he took his seat on the bench behind them; and, in more than one debate, defended them with powers far superior to their own. The King perfectly understood the value of such assistance. On one occasion, at the palace, he took the old minister and the new minister aside: "If we three," he said, "keep together, all will go well."

But it was hardly possible, human nature being what it is, and, more especially, Pitt and Addington being what they were, that this union should be durable. Pitt, conscious of superior powers, imagined that the place which he had quitted was now occupied by a mere puppet which he had set up, which he was to govern while he suffered it to remain, and which he was to fling aside as soon as he wished to resume his old position. Nor was it long before he began to pine for the power which he had relinquished. He had been so early raised to supreme authority in the state, and had enjoyed that authority so long, that it had become necessary to him. In retirement his days passed heavily. He could not, like Fox, forget the pleasures and cares of ambition in the company of Euripides or Herodotus. Pride restrained him from intimating, even to his dearest friends, that he wished to be again minister. But he thought it strange, almost ungrateful, that his wish had not been divined, that it had not been anticipated, by one whom he regarded as his deputy.

Addington, on the other hand, was by no means inclined to descend from his high position. He was, indeed, under a delusion much resembling that of Abou Hassan in the Arabian tale. His brain was turned by his short and unreal Caliphate. He took his elevation quite seriously, attributed it to his own merit, and considered himself as one of the great triumvirate of English statesmen, as worthy to make a third with Pitt and Fox.

Such being the feelings of the late minister and of the present minister, a rupture was inevitable; and there was no want of persons bent on making that rupture speedy and violent. Some of these persons wounded Addington's pride by representing him as a lacquey, sent to keep a place on the Treasury bench till his master should find it convenient to come. Others took every opportunity of praising him at Pitt's expense. Pitt had waged a long, a bloody, a costly, and unsuccessful war. Addington had made peace. Pitt had suspended the constitutional liberties of Englishmen. Under Addington those liberties were again enjoyed. Pitt had wasted the public resources. Addington was carefully nursing them. It was sometimes but too evident that these compliments were not unpleasing to Addington. Pitt became cold and reserved. During many months he remained at a distance from London. Meanwhile his most intimate friends, in spite of his declarations that he made no complaint, and that he had no wish for office, exerted themselves to effect a change of ministry. His favorite disciple, George Canning, young, ardent, ambitious, with great powers and great virtues, but with a temper too restless and a wit too satirical for his own happiness, was indefatigable. He spoke; he wrote; he intrigued; he tried to induce a large number of the supporters of the government to sign a round-robin desiring a change; he made game of Addington and of Addington's relations in a succession of lively pasquinades. The minister's partisans retorted with equal acrimony, if not with equal vivacity. Pitt could keep out of the affray only by keeping out of politics altogether; and this it soon became impossible for him to do. Had Napoleon, content with the first place among the sovereigns of the Continent, and with a military reputation surpassing that of Marlborough or of Turenne, devoted himself to the noble task of making France happy by mild administration and wise legislation, our country might have long continued to tolerate a government of fair intentions and feeble abilities. Unhappily, the treaty of Amiens had scarcely been signed, when the restless ambition and the insupportable insolence of the First Consul convinced the great body of the English people that the peace, so eagerly welcomed, was only a precarious armistice. As it became clearer and clearer that a war for the dignity, the independence, the very existence of the nation was at hand, men looked with increasing uneasiness on the weak and languid cabinet which would have to contend against an enemy who united more than the power of Louis the Great to more than the genius of Frederic the Great. It is true that Addington might easily have been a better war minister than Pitt, and could not possibly have been a worse. But Pitt had cast a spell on the public mind. The eloquence, the judgment, the calm and disdainful firmness, which he had, during many years, displayed in Parliament, deluded the world into the belief that he must be eminently qualified to superintend every department of politics; and they imagined, even after the miserable failures of Dunkirk, of Quiberon, and of the Helder, that he was the only statesman who could cope with Bonaparte. This feeling was nowhere stronger than among Addington's own colleagues. The pressure put on him was so strong that he could not help yielding to it; yet, even in yielding, he showed how far he was from knowing his own place. His first proposition was, that some insignificant nobleman should be First Lord of the Treasury and nominal head of the administration, and that the real power should be divided between Pitt and himself, who were to be secretaries of state. Pitt, as might have been expected, refused even to discuss such a scheme, and talked of it with bitter mirth. "Which secretaryship was offered to you?" his friend Wilberforce asked. "Really," said Pitt, "I had not the curiosity to inquire." Addington was frightened into bidding higher. He offered to resign the Treasury to Pitt, on condition that there should be no extensive change in the government. But Pitt would listen to no such terms. Then came a dispute such as often arises after negotiations orally conducted, even when the negotiators are men of strict honor. Pitt gave one account of what had passed; Addington gave another; and, though the discrepancies were not such as necessarily implied any intentional violation of truth on either side, both were greatly exasperated.

Meanwhile the quarrel with the First Consul had come to a crisis. On the sixteenth of May, 1803, the King sent a message calling on the House of Commons to support him in withstanding the ambitious and encroaching policy of France; and on the twenty-second the House took the message into consideration.

Pitt had now been living many months in retirement. There had been a general election since he had spoken in Parliament; and there were two hundred members who had never heard him. It was known that on this occasion he would be in his place; and curiosity was wound up to the highest point. Unfortunately, the shorthand writers were, in consequence of some mistake, shut out on that day from the gallery, so that the newspapers contained only a very meagre report of the proceedings. But several accounts of what passed are extant; and of those accounts the most interesting is contained in an unpublished letter, written by a very young member, John William Ward, afterwards Earl of Dudley. When Pitt rose, he was received with loud cheering. At every pause in his speech there was a burst of applause. The peroration is said to have been one of the most animated and magnificent ever heard in Parliament. "Pitt's speech," Fox wrote a few days later, "was admired very much, and very justly. I think it was the best he ever made in that style." The debate was adjourned; and on the second night Fox replied in an oration which, as the most zealous Pittites were forced to acknowledge, left the palm of eloquence doubtful. Addington made a pitiable appearance between the two great rivals; and it was observed that Pitt, while exhorting the Commons to stand resolutely by the executive government against France, said not a word indicating esteem or friendship for the Prime Minister.

War was speedily declared. The First Consul threatened to invade England at the head of the conquerors of Belgium and Italy, and formed a great camp near the Straits of Dover. On the other side of those Straits the whole population of our island was ready to rise up as one man in defence of the soil. At this conjuncture, as at some other great conjunctures in our history, — the conjuncture of 1660, for example, and the conjuncture of 1688, — there was a general disposition among honest and patriotic men to forget old quarrels, and to regard as a friend every person who was ready, in the existing emergency, to do his part towards the saving of the state. A coalition of all the first men in the country would, at that moment, have been as popular as the coalition of 1783 had been unpopular. Alone in the kingdom the King looked with perfect complacency on a cabinet in which no man superior to himself in genius was to be found, and was so far from being willing to admit all his ablest subjects to office that he was bent on excluding them all.

A few months passed before the different parties which agreed in regarding the government with dislike and contempt came to an understanding with each other. But in the spring of 1804 it became evident that the weakest of ministries would have to defend itself against the strongest of oppositions, an opposition made up of three oppositions, each of which would, separately, have been formidable from ability, and which, when united, were also formidable from number. The party which had opposed the peace, headed by Grenville and Windham, and the party which had opposed the renewal of the war, headed by Fox, concurred in thinking that the men now in power were incapable of either making a good peace or waging a vigorous war. Pitt had, in 1802, spoken for peace against the party of Grenville, and had, in 1803, spoken for war against the party of Fox. But of the capacity of the cabinet, and especially of its chief, for the conduct of great affairs, he thought as meanly as either Fox or Grenville. Questions were easily found on which all the enemies of the government could act cordially together. The unfortunate First Lord of the Treasury, who had, during the earlier months of his administration, been supported by Pitt on one side, and by Fox on the other, now had to answer Pitt, and to be answered by Fox. Two sharp debates, followed by close divisions, made him weary of his post. It was known, too, that the Upper House was even more hostile to him than the Lower, that the Scotch representative peers wavered, that there were signs of mutiny among the bishops. In the cabinet itself there was discord, and, worse than discord, treachery. It was necessary to give way; the ministry was dissolved; and the task of forming a government was entrusted to Pitt.

Pitt was of opinion that there was now an opportunity, such as had never before offered itself, and such as might never offer itself again, of uniting in the public service, on honorable terms, all the eminent talents of the kingdom. The passions to which the French Revolution had given birth were extinct. The madness of the innovator and the madness of the alarmist had alike had their day. Jacobinism and Anti-Jacobinism had gone out of fashion together. The most liberal statesman did not think that season propitious for schemes of parliamentary reform; and the most conservative statesman could not pretend that there was any occasion for gagging bills and suspensions of the Habeas Corpus Act. The great struggle for independence and national honor occupied all minds; and those who were agreed as to the duty of maintaining that struggle with vigor might well postpone to a more convenient time all disputes about matters comparatively unimportant. Strongly impressed by these considerations, Pitt wished to form a ministry including all the first men in the country. The Treasury he reserved for himself; and to Fox he proposed to assign a share of power little inferior to his own.

The plan was excellent; but the king would not hear of it. Dull, obstinate, unforgiving, and at that time half mad, he positively refused to admit Fox into his service. Anybody else, even men who had gone as far as Fox, or further than Fox, in what his Majesty considered as Jacobinism, — Sheridan, Grey, Erskine, — should be graciously received; but Fox never. During several hours Pitt labored in vain to reason down this senseless antipathy. That he was perfectly sincere there can be no doubt; but it was not enough to be sincere; he should have been resolute. Had he declared himself determined not to take office without Fox, the royal obstinacy would have given way, as it gave way, a few months later, when opposed to the immutable resolution of Lord Grenville. In an evil hour Pitt yielded. He flattered himself with the hope that, though he consented to forego the aid of his illustrious rival, there would still remain ample materials for the formation of an efficient ministry. That hope was cruelly disappointed. Fox entreated his friends to leave personal considerations out of the question, and declared that he would support, with the utmost cordiality, an efficient and patriotic ministry from which he should be himself excluded. Not only his friends, however, but Grenville, and Grenville's adherents, answered with one voice, that the question was not personal, that a great constitutional principle was at stake, and that they would not take office while a man eminently qualified to render service to the commonwealth was placed under a ban merely because he was disliked at Court. All that was left to Pitt was to construct a government out of the wreck of Addington's feeble administration. The small circle of his personal retainers furnished him with a very few useful assistants, particularly Dundas, who had been created Viscount Melville, Lord Harrowby, and Canning.

Such was the inauspicious manner in which Pitt entered on his second administration. The whole history of that administration was of a piece with the commencement. Almost every month brought some new disaster or disgrace. To the war with France was soon added a war with Spain. The opponents of the minister were numerous, able, and active. His most useful coadjutors were soon lost. Sickness deprived him of the help of Lord Harrowby. It was discovered that Lord Melville had been guilty of highly culpable laxity in transactions relating to public money. He was censured by the House of Commons, driven from office, ejected from the Privy Council, and impeached of high crimes and misdemeanors. The blow fell heavy on Pitt. It gave him, he said in Parliament, a deep pang; and, as he uttered the word pang, his lip quivered, his voice shook, he paused, and his hearers thought that he was about to burst into tears. Such tears shed by Eldon would have moved nothing but laughter. Shed by the warm-hearted and open-hearted Fox, they would have moved sympathy, but would have caused no surprise. But a tear from Pitt would have been something portentous. He suppressed his emotion, however, and proceeded with his usual majestic self-possession.

His difficulties compelled him to resort to various expedients. At one time Addington was persuaded to accept office with a peerage; but he brought no additional strength to the government. Though he went through the form of reconciliation, it was impossible for him to forget the past. While he remained in place he was jealous and punctilious, and he soon retired again. At another time Pitt renewed his efforts to overcome his master's aversion to Fox; and it was rumored that the King's obstinacy was gradually giving way. But, meanwhile, it was impossible for the minister to conceal from the public eye the decay of his health, and the constant anxiety which gnawed at his heart. His sleep was broken. His food ceased to nourish him. All who passed him in the Park, all who had interviews with him in Downing Street, saw misery written in his face. The peculiar look which he wore during the last months of his life was often pathetically described by Wilberforce, who used to call it the Austerlitz look.

Still the vigor of Pitt's intellectual faculties and the intrepid haughtiness of his spirit remained unaltered. He had staked everything on a great venture. He had succeeded in forming another mighty coalition against the French ascendency. The united forces of Austria, Russia, and England might, he hoped, oppose an insurmountable barrier to the ambition of the common enemy. But the genius and energy of Napoleon prevailed. While the English troops were preparing to embark for Germany, while the Russian troops were slowly coming up from Poland, he, with rapidity unprecedented in modern war, moved a hundred thousand men from the shores of the Ocean to the Black Forest, and compelled a great Austrian army to surrender at Ulm. To the first faint rumors of this calamity Pitt would give no credit. He was irritated by the alarms of those around him. "Do not believe a word of it," he said; "it is all a fiction." The next day he received a Dutch newspaper containing the capitulation. He knew no Dutch. It was Sunday; and the public offices were shut. He carried the paper to Lord Malmesbury, who had been minister in Holland; and Lord Malmesbury translated it. Pitt tried to bear up; but the shock was too great; and he went away with death in his face.

The news of the battle of Trafalgar arrived four days later, and seemed for a moment to revive him. Forty-eight hours after that most glorious and most mournful of victories had been announced to the country came the Lord Mayor's day; and Pitt dined at Guildhall. His popularity had declined. But on this occasion, the multitude, greatly excited by the recent tidings, welcomed him enthusiastically, took off his horses in Cheapside, and drew his carriage up King Street. When his health was drunk, he returned thanks in two or three of those stately sentences of which he had a boundless command. Several of those who heard him laid up his words in their hearts; for they were the last words that he ever uttered in public: "Let us hope that England, having saved herself by her energy, may save Europe by her example."

This was but a momentary rally. Austerlitz soon completed what Ulm had begun. Early in December Pitt had retired to Bath, in the hope that he might there gather strength for the approaching session. While he was languishing there on his sofa arrived the news that a decisive battle had been fought and lost in Moravia, that the coalition was dissolved, that the Continent was at the feet of France. He sank down under the blow. Ten days later he was so emaciated that his most intimate friends hardly knew him. He came up from Bath by slow journeys, and on the eleventh of January, 1806, reached his villa at Putney. Parliament was to meet on the twenty-first. On the twentieth was to be the parliamentary dinner at the house of the First Lord of the Treasury in Downing Street; and the cards were already issued. But the days of the great minister were numbered. The only chance for his life, and that a very slight chance, was, that he should resign his office, and pass some months in profound repose. His colleagues paid him very short visits, and carefully avoided political conversation. But his spirit, long accustomed to dominion, could not, even in that extremity, relinquish hopes, which everybody but himself perceived to be vain. On the day on which he was carried into his bedroom at Putney, the Marquess Wellesley, whom he had long loved, whom he had sent to govern India, and whose administration had been eminently able, energetic, and successful, arrived in London after an absence of eight years. The friends saw each other once more. There was an affectionate meeting and a last parting. That it was a last parting Pitt did not seem to be aware. He fancied himself to be recovering, talked on various subjects cheerfully, and with an unclouded mind, and pronounced a warm and discerning eulogium on the Marquess's brother Arthur. "I never," he said, "met with any military man with whom it was so satisfactory to converse." The excitement and exertion of this interview were too much for the sick man. He fainted away; and Lord Wellesley left the house, convinced that the close was fast approaching.

And now members of Parliament were fast coming up to London. The chiefs of the Opposition met for the purpose of considering the course to be taken on the first day of the session. It was easy to guess what would be the language of the King's speech, and of the address which would be moved in answer to that speech. An amendment condemning the policy of the government had been prepared, and was to have been proposed in the House of Commons by Lord Henry Petty, a young nobleman who had already won for himself that place in the esteem of his country which, after the lapse of more than half a century, he still retains. He was unwilling, however, to come forward as the accuser of one who was incapable of defending himself. Lord Grenville, who had been informed of Pitt's state by Lord Wellesley, and had been deeply affected by it, earnestly recommended forbearance; and Fox, with characteristic generosity and good nature, gave his voice against attacking his now helpless rival. "Sunt lacrymæ rerum," he said, "et mentem mortalia tangunt." On the first day, therefore, there was no debate. It was rumored that evening that Pitt was better. But on the following morning his physicians pronounced that there were no hopes. The commanding faculties of which he had been too proud were beginning to fail. His old tutor and friend, the Bishop of Lincoln, informed him of his danger, and gave such religious advice and consolation as a confused and obscured mind could receive. Stories were told of devout sentiments fervently uttered by the dying man. But these stories found no credit with anybody who knew him. Wilberforce pronounced it impossible that they could be true. "Pitt," he added, "was a man who always said less than he thought on such topics." It was asserted in many after-dinner speeches, Grub Street elegies, and academic prize poems and prize declamations, that the great minister died exclaiming, "Oh, my country!" This is a fable; but it is true that the last words which he uttered, while he knew what he said, were broken exclamations about the alarming state of public affairs. He ceased to breathe on the morning of the twenty-third of January, 1806, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the day on which he first took his seat in Parliament. He was in his forty-seventh year, and had been, during near nineteen years, First Lord of the Treasury, and undisputed chief of the administration. Since parliamentary government was established in England, no English statesman has held supreme power so long. Walpole, it is true, was First Lord of the Treasury during more than twenty years; but it was not till Walpole had been some time First Lord of the Treasury that he could be properly called Prime Minister.

It was moved in the House of Commons that Pitt should be honored with a public funeral and a monument. The motion was opposed by Fox in a speech which deserves to be studied as a model of good taste and good feeling. The task was the most invidious that ever an orator undertook; but it was performed with a humanity and delicacy which were warmly acknowledged by the mourning friends of him who was gone. The motion was carried by 288 votes to 89.

The twenty-second of February was fixed for the funeral. The corpse, having lain in state during two days in the Painted Chamber, was borne with great pomp to the northern transept of the Abbey. A splendid train of princes, nobles, bishops, and privy councillors followed. The grave of Pitt had been made near to the spot where his great father lay, near also to the spot where his great rival was soon to lie. The sadness of the assistants was beyond that of ordinary mourners. For he whom they were committing to the dust had died of sorrows and anxieties of which none of the survivors could be altogether without a share. Wilberforce, who carried the banner before the hearse, described the awful ceremony with deep feeling. As the coffin descended into the earth, he said, the eagle face of Chatham from above seemed to look down with consternation into the dark house which was receiving all that remained of so much power and glory.

All parties in the House of Commons readily concurred in voting forty thousand pounds to satisfy the demands of Pitt's creditors. Some of his admirers seemed to consider the magnitude of his embarrassments as a circumstance highly honorable to him; but men of sense will probably be of a different opinion. It is far better, no doubt, that a great minister should carry his contempt of money to excess than that he should contaminate his hands with unlawful gain. But it is neither right nor becoming in a man to whom the public has given an income more than sufficient for his comfort and dignity to bequeath to that public a great debt, the effect of mere negligence and profusion. As First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, Pitt never had less than six thousand a year, besides an excellent house. In

1792 he was forced by his royal master's friendly importunity to accept for life the office of Warden of the Cinque Ports, with near four thousand a year more. He had neither wife nor child; he had no needy relations; he had no expensive tastes; he had no long election bills. Had he given but a quarter of an hour a week to the regulation of his household, he would have kept his expenditure within bounds. Or, if he could not spare even a quarter of an hour a week for that purpose, he had numerous friends, excellent men of business, who would have been proud to act as his stewards. One of those friends, the chief of a great commercial house in the city, made an attempt to put the establishment in Downing Street to rights; but in vain. He found that the waste of the servants' hall was almost fabulous. The quantity of butcher's meat charged in the bills was nine hundredweight a week. The consumption of poultry, of fish, and of tea was in proportion. The character of Pitt would have stood higher if, with the disinterestedness of Pericles and of De Witt, he had united their dignified frugality.

The memory of Pitt has been assailed, times innumerable, often justly, often unjustly; but it has suffered much less from his assailants than from his eulogists. For, during many years, his name was the rallying cry of a class of men with whom, at one of those terrible conjunctures which confound all ordinary distinctions, he was accidentally and temporarily connected, but to whom, on almost all great questions of principle, he was diametrically opposed. The haters of parliamentary reform called themselves Pittites, not choosing to remember that Pitt made three motions for parliamentary reform, and that, though he thought that such a reform could not safely be made while the passions excited by the French Revolution were raging, he never uttered a word indicating that he should not be prepared at a more convenient season to bring the question forward a fourth time. The toast of Protestant ascendency was drunk on Pitt's birthday by a set of Pittites who could not but be aware that Pitt had resigned his office because he could not carry Catholic emancipation. The defenders of the Test Act called themselves Pittites, though they could not be ignorant that Pitt had laid before George the Third unanswerable reasons for abolishing the Test Act. The enemies of free trade called themselves Pittites, though Pitt was far more deeply imbued with the doctrines of Adam Smith than either Fox or Grey. The very negro-drivers invoked the name of Pitt, whose eloquence was never more conspicuously displayed than when he spoke of the wrongs of the negro. This mythical Pitt, who resembles the genuine Pitt as little as the Charlemagne of Ariosto resembles the Charlemagne of Eginhard, has had his day. History will vindicate the real man from calumny disguised under the semblance of adulation, and will exhibit him as what he was, a minister of great talents, honest intentions, and liberal opinions, preëminently qualified, intellectually and morally, for the part of a parliamentary leader, and capable of administering, with prudence and moderation, the government of a prosperous and tranquil country, but unequal to surprising and terrible emergencies, and liable in such emergencies to err grievously both on the side of weakness and on the side of violence.

POEMS

LAYS OF ANCIENT ROME

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

That what is called the history of the Kings and early Consuls of Rome is to a great extent fabulous, few scholars have, since the time of Beaufort, ventured to deny. It is certain that, more than three hundred and sixty years after the date ordinarily assigned for the foundation of the city, the public records were, with scarcely an exception, destroyed by the Gauls. It is certain that the oldest annals of the commonwealth were compiled more than a century and a half after this destruction of the records. It is certain, therefore, that the great Latin writers of the Augustan age did not possess those materials, without which a trustworthy account of the infancy of the republic could not possibly be framed. Those writers own, indeed, that the chronicles to which they had access were filled with battles that were never fought, and Consuls that were never inaugurated; and we have abundant proof that, in these chronicles, events of the greatest importance, such as the issue of the war with Porsena and the issue of the war with Brennus, were grossly misrepresented. Under these circumstances a wise man will look with great suspicion on the legend which has come down to us. He will perhaps be inclined to regard the princes who are said to have founded the civil and religious institutions of Rome, the son of Mars, and the husband of Egeria, as mere mythological personages, of the same class with Perseus and Ixion. As he draws nearer and nearer to the confines of authentic history, he will become less and less hard of belief. He will admit that the most important parts of the narrative have some foundation in truth. But he will distrust almost all the details, not only because they seldom rest on any solid evidence, but also because he will constantly detect in them, even when they are within the limits of physical possibility, that peculiar character, more easily understood than defined, which distinguishes the creations of the imagination from the realities of the world in which we live.

The early history of Rome is indeed far more poetical than anything else in Latin literature. The loves of the Vestal and the God of War, the cradle laid among the reeds of Tiber, the fig-tree, the she-wolf, the shepherd's cabin, the recognition, the fratricide, the rape of the Sabines, the death of Tarpeia, the fall of Hostus Hostilius, the struggle of Mettus Curtius through the marsh, the women rushing with torn raiment and dishevelled hair between their fathers and their husbands, the nightly meetings of Numa and the Nymph by the well in the sacred grove, the fight of the three Romans and the three Albans, the purchase of the Sibylline books, the crime of Tullia, the simulated madness of Brutus, the ambiguous reply of the Delphian oracle to the Tarquins, the wrongs of Lucretia, the heroic actions of Horatius Cocles, of Scævola, and of Clœlia, the battle of Regillus won by the aid of Castor and Pollux, the defence of Cremera, the touching story of Coriolanus, the still more touching story of Virginia, the wild legend about the draining of the Alban lake, the combat between Valerius Corvus and the gigantic Gaul, are among the many instances which will at once suggest themselves to every reader.

In the narrative of Livy, who was a man of fine imagination, these stories retain much of their genuine character. Nor could even the tasteless Dionysius distort and mutilate them into mere prose. The poetry shines, in spite of him, through the dreary pedantry of his eleven books. It is discernible in the most tedious and in the most superficial modern works on the early times of Rome. It enlivens the dulness of the Universal History, and gives a charm to the most meagre abridgments of Goldsmith.

Even in the age of Plutarch there were discerning men who rejected the popular account of the foundation of Rome, because that account appeared to them to have the air, not of a history, but of a romance or a drama. Plutarch, who was displeased at their incredulity, had nothing better to say in reply to their arguments than that chance sometimes turns poet, and produces trains of events not to be distinguished from the most elaborate plots which are constructed by art.[1] But though the existence of a poetical element in the early history of the Great City was detected so many ages ago, the first critic who distinctly saw from what source that poetical element had been derived was James Perizonius, one of the most acute and learned antiquaries of the seventeenth century. His theory, which in his own days attracted little or no notice, was revived in the present generation by Niebuhr, a man who would have been the first writer of his time, if his talent for communicating truths had borne any proportion to his talent for investigating them. That theory has been adopted by several eminent scholars of our own country, particularly by the Bishop of St. David's, by Professor Malden, and by the lamented Arnold. It appears to be now generally received by men conversant with classical antiquity; and indeed it rests on such strong proofs, both internal and external, that it will not be easily subverted. A popular exposition of this theory, and of the evidence by which it is supported, may not be without interest even for readers who are unacquainted with the ancient languages.

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[1] *Ὕποπτον μὲν ἐνίοις ἐστὶ τὸ δραματικὸν καὶ πλασματῶδες· οὐ δεῖ δὲ ἀπιστεῖν, τὴν τύχην ὁρῶντας, οἵων ποιημάτων δημιουργός ἐστι.* — Plut. Rom. viii. This remarkable passage has been more grossly misinterpreted than any other in the Greek language, where the sense was so obvious. The Latin version of Cruserius, the French version of Amyot, the old English version by several hands, and the later English version by Langhorne are all equally destitute of every trace of the meaning of the original. None of the translators saw even that *ποίημα* is a poem. They all render it an event.

The Latin literature which has come down to us is of later date than the commencement of the Second Punic War, and consists almost exclusively of works fashioned on Greek models. The Latin metres, heroic, elegiac, lyric, and dramatic, are of Greek origin. The best Latin epic poetry is the feeble echo of the Iliad and Odyssey. The best Latin eclogues are imitations of Theocritus. The plan of the most finished didactic poem in the Latin tongue was taken from Hesiod. The Latin tragedies are bad copies of the masterpieces of Sophocles and Euripides. The Latin comedies are free translations from Demophilus, Menander, and Apollodorus. The Latin philosophy was borrowed, without alteration, from the Portico and the Academy; and the great Latin orators constantly proposed to themselves as patterns the speeches of Demosthenes and Lysias.

But there was an earlier Latin literature, a literature truly Latin, which has wholly perished, which had, indeed, almost wholly perished long before those whom we are in the habit of regarding as the greatest Latin writers were born. That literature abounded with metrical romances, such as are found in every country where there is much curiosity and intelligence, but little reading and writing. All human beings, not utterly savage, long for some information about past times, and are delighted by narratives which present pictures to the eye of the mind. But it is only in very enlightened communities that books are readily accessible. Metrical composition, therefore, which, in a highly civilized nation, is a mere luxury, is, in nations imperfectly civilized, almost a necessary of life, and is valued less on account of the pleasure which it gives to the ear, than on account of the help which it gives to the memory. A man who can invent or embellish an interesting story, and put it into a form which others may easily retain in their recollection, will always be highly esteemed by a people eager for amusement and information, but destitute of libraries. Such is the origin of ballad-poetry, a species of composition which scarcely ever fails to spring up and flourish in every society, at a certain point in the progress towards refinement. Tacitus informs us that songs were the only memorials of the past which the ancient Germans possessed. We learn from Lucan and from Ammianus Marcellinus that the brave actions of the ancient Gauls were commemorated in the verses of Bards. During many ages, and through many revolutions, minstrelsy retained its influence over both the Teutonic and the Celtic race. The vengeance exacted by the spouse of Attila for the murder of Siegfried was celebrated in rhymes, of which Germany is still justly proud. The exploits of Athelstane were commemorated by the Anglo-Saxons, and those of Canute by the Danes, in rude poems, of which a few fragments have come down to us. The chants of the Welsh harpers preserved, through ages of darkness, a faint and doubtful memory of Arthur. In the Highlands of Scotland may still be gleaned some relics of the old songs about Cuthullin and Fingal. The long struggle of the Servians against the Ottoman power was recorded in lays full of martial spirit. We learn from Herrera that, when a Peruvian Inca died, men of skill were appointed to celebrate him in verses, which all the people learned by heart, and sang in public on days of festival. The feats of Kurroglou, the great freebooter of Turkistan, recounted in ballads composed by himself, are known in every village of northern Persia. Captain Beechey heard the bards of the Sandwich Islands recite the heroic achievements of Tamehameha, the most illustrious of their kings. Mungo Park found in the heart of Africa a class of singing men, the only annalists of their rude tribes, and heard them tell the story of the victory which Damel, the negro prince of the

Jaloffs, won over Abdulkader, the Mussulman tyrant of Foota Torra. This species of poetry attained a high degree of excellence among the Castilians, before they began to copy Tuscan patterns. It attained a still higher degree of excellence among the English and the Lowland Scotch, during the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries. But it reached its full perfection in ancient Greece; for there can be no doubt that the great Homeric poems are generically ballads, though widely distinguished from all other ballads, and indeed from almost all other human compositions, by transcendent sublimity and beauty.

As it is agreeable to general experience that, at a certain stage in the progress of society, ballad-poetry should flourish, so is it also agreeable to general experience that, at a subsequent stage in the progress of society, ballad-poetry should be undervalued and neglected. Knowledge advances; manners change; great foreign models of composition are studied and imitated. The phraseology of the old minstrels becomes obsolete. Their versification, which, having received its laws only from the ear, abounds in irregularities, seems licentious and uncouth. Their simplicity appears beggarly when compared with the quaint forms and gaudy coloring of such artists as Cowley and Gongora. The ancient lays, unjustly despised by the learned and polite, linger for a time in the memory of the vulgar, and are at length too often irretrievably lost. We cannot wonder that the ballads of Rome should have altogether disappeared, when we remember how very narrowly, in spite of the invention of printing, those of our own country and those of Spain escaped the same fate. There is indeed little doubt that oblivion covers many English songs equal to any that were published by Bishop Percy, and many Spanish songs as good as the best of those which have been so happily translated by Mr. Lockhart. Eighty years ago England possessed only one tattered copy of Childe Waters and Sir Cauline, and

Spain only one tattered copy of the noble poem of the Cid. The snuff of a candle, or a mischievous dog, might in a moment have deprived the world forever of any of those fine compositions. Sir Walter Scott, who united to the fire of a great poet the minute curiosity and patient diligence of a great antiquary, was but just in time to save the precious relics of the Minstrelsy of the Border. In Germany, the lay of the Nibelungs had been long utterly forgotten, when, in the eighteenth century, it was, for the first time, printed from a manuscript in the old library of a noble family. In truth, the only people who, through their whole passage from simplicity to the highest civilization, never for a moment ceased to love and admire their old ballads, were the Greeks.

That the early Romans should have had ballad-poetry, and that this poetry should have perished, is therefore not strange. It would, on the contrary, have been strange if these things had not come to pass; and we should be justified in pronouncing them highly probable, even if we had no direct evidence on the subject. But we have direct evidence of unquestionable authority.

Ennius, who flourished in the time of the Second Punic War, was regarded in the Augustan age as the father of Latin poetry. He was, in truth, the father of the second school of Latin poetry, the only school of which the works have descended to us. But from Ennius himself we learn that there were poets who stood to him in the same relation in which the author of the romance of Count Alarcos stood to Garcilaso, or the author of the Lytell Geste of Robyn Hode to Lord Surrey. Ennius speaks of verses which the Fauns and the Bards were wont to chant in the old time, when none had yet studied the graces of speech, when none had yet climbed the peaks sacred to the Goddesses of Grecian song. "Where," Cicero mournfully asks, "are those old verses now?"[1]

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[1] "Quid? Nostri versus ubi sunt?
. . . 'Quos olim Fauni vatesque canebant,

Contemporary with Ennius was Quintus Fabius Pictor, the earliest of the Roman annalists. His account of the infancy and youth of Romulus and Remus has been preserved by Dionysius, and contains a very remarkable reference to the ancient Latin poetry. Fabius says that, in his time, his countrymen were still in the habit of singing ballads about the Twins. "Even in the hut of Faustulus," — so these old lays appear to have run, — "the children of Rhea and Mars were, in port and in spirit, not like unto swineherds or cowherds, but such that men might well guess them to be of the blood of kings and gods."[1]

> Cum neque Musarum scopulos quisquam superârat,
> Nec dicti studiosus erat.'"

Brutus, xxii.

The Muses, it should be observed, are Greek divinities. The Italian Goddesses of verse were the Camœnæ. At a later period, the appellations were used indiscriminately; but in the age of Ennius there was probably a distinction. In the epitaph of Nævius, who was the representative of the old Italian school of poetry, the Camœnæ, not the Muses, are represented as grieving for the loss of their votary. The "Musarum scopuli" are evidently the peaks of Parnassus.

Scaliger, in a note on Varro (De Lingua Latina, lib. vi.), suggests, with great ingenuity, that the Fauns, who were represented by the superstition of later ages as a race of monsters, half gods and half brutes, may really have been a class of men who exercised in Latium, at a very remote period, the same functions which belonged to the Magians in Persia and to the Bards in Gaul.

[1] *Οἱ δὲ ἀνδρωθέντες γίνονται, κατά τε ἀξίωσιν μορφῆς καὶ φρονήματος ὄγκον οὐ συοφορβοῖς καὶ βουκόλοις ἐοικότες, ἀλλ' οἵους ἄν τις ἀξιώσειε τοὺς ἐκ βασιλείου τε φύντας γένους, καὶ ἀπὸ δαιμόνων σπορᾶς γενέσθαι νομιζομένους, ὡς ἐν τοῖς πατρίοις ὕμνοις ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίων ἔτι καὶ νῦν ᾄδεται.* — Dion. Hal. i. 79. This passage has sometimes been cited as if Dionysius had been speaking in his own person, and had, Greek as he was, been so industrious or so fortunate as to discover some valuable remains of that early Latin poetry which the greatest Latin writers of his age regretted as hopelessly lost. Such a supposition is highly improbable; and indeed it seems clear from the context that Dionysius, as Reiske and other editors evidently thought, was merely quoting from Fabius Pictor. The whole passage has the air of an extract from an ancient chronicle, and is introduced by the words, *Κόϊντος μὲν Φάβιος, ὁ Πίκτωρ λεγόμενος, τῇδε γράφει.*

Another argument may be urged which seems to deserve consideration. The author of the passage in question mentions a thatched hut which, in his time, stood between the summit of Mount Palatine and the Circus.

Cato the Censor, who also lived in the days of the Second Punic War, mentioned this lost literature in his lost work on the antiquities of his country. Many ages, he said, before his time, there were ballads in praise of illustrious men; and these ballads it was the fashion for the

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This hut, he says, was built by Romulus, and was constantly kept in repair at the public charge, but never in any respect embellished. Now, in the age of Dionysius there certainly was at Rome a thatched hut, said to have been that of Romulus. But this hut, as we learn from Vitruvius, stood, not near the Circus, but in the Capitol. (Vit. ii. 1.) If, therefore, we understand Dionysius to speak in his own person, we can reconcile his statement with that of Vitruvius only by supposing that there were at Rome, in the Augustan age, two thatched huts, both believed to have been built by Romulus, and both carefully repaired and held in high honor. The objections to such a supposition seem to be strong. Neither Dionysius nor Vitruvius speaks of more than one such hut. Dio Cassius informs us that twice, during the long administration of Augustus, the hut of Romulus caught fire. (xlviii. 43, liv. 29.) Had there been two such huts, would he not have told us of which he spoke? An English historian would hardly give an account of a fire at Queen's College without saying whether it was at Queen's College, Oxford, or at Queen's College, Cambridge. Marcus Seneca, Macrobius, and Conon, a Greek writer from whom Photius has made large extracts, mention only one hut of Romulus, that in the Capitol. (M. Seneca, Contr. i. 6; Macrobius, Sat. i. 15; Photius, Bibl. 186.) Ovid, Livy, Petronius, Valerius Maximus, Lucius Seneca, and St. Jerome mention only one hut of Romulus, without specifying the site. (Ovid. Fasti, iii. 183; Liv. v. 53; Petronius Fragm.; Val. Max. iv. 4; L. Seneca, Consolatio ad Helviam; D. Hieron. ad Paulinianum de Didymo.)

The whole difficulty is removed, if we suppose that Dionysius was merely quoting Fabius Pictor. Nothing is more probable than that the cabin, which in the time of Fabius stood near the Circus, might, long before the age of Augustus, have been transported to the Capitol, as the place fittest, by reason both of its safety and of its sanctity, to contain so precious a relic.

The language of Plutarch confirms this hypothesis. He describes, with great precision, the spot where Romulus dwelt, on the slope of Mount Palatine, leading to the Circus; but he says not a word implying that the dwelling was still to be seen there. Indeed, his expressions imply that it was no longer there. The evidence of Solinus is still more to the point. He, like Plutarch, describes the spot where Romulus had resided, and says expressly that the hut had been there, but that in his time it was there no longer. The site, it is certain, was well remembered; and probably retained its old name, as Charing Cross and the Haymarket have done. This is probably the explanation of the words, "casa Romuli," in Victor's description of the Tenth Region of Rome, under Valentinian.

guests at banquets to sing in turn while the piper played. "Would," exclaims Cicero, "that we still had the old ballads of which Cato speaks!"[1]

Valerius Maximus gives us exactly similar information, without mentioning his authority, and observes that the ancient Roman ballads were probably of more benefit to the young than all the lectures of the Athenian schools, and that to the influence of the national poetry were to be ascribed the virtues of such men as Camillus and Fabricius.[2]

Varro, whose authority on all questions connected with the antiquities of his country is entitled to the greatest respect, tells us that at banquets it was once the fashion for boys to sing, sometimes with and sometimes without instrumental music, ancient ballads in praise of men of former times. These young performers, he observes, were of unblemished character, a circumstance which he probably mentioned because, among the Greeks, and indeed, in his time among the Romans also, the morals of singing boys were in no high repute.[3]

The testimony of Horace, though given incidentally, confirms the statements of Cato, Valerius Maximus, and Varro. The poet predicts that, under the peaceful administration of Augustus, the Romans will, over their full goblets, sing to the pipe, after the fashion of their fathers, the deeds of brave captains, and the ancient legends touching the origin of the city.[1]

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[1] Cicero refers twice to this important passage in Cato's Antiquities: "Gravissimus auctor in Originibus dixit Cato, morem apud majores hunc epularum fuisse, ut deinceps, qui accubarent, canerent ad tibiam clarorum virorum laudes atque virtutes. Ex quo perspicuum est, et cantus tum fuisse rescriptos vocum sonis, et carmina." — Tusc. Quæst. iv. 2. Again: "Utinam exstarent illa carmina, quæ, multis sæculis ante suam ætatem, in epulis esse cantitata a singulis convivis de clarorum virorum laudibus, in Originibus scriptum reliquit Cato." — Brutus, xix.

[2] "Majores natu in conviviis ad tibias egregia superiorum opera carmine comprehensa pangebant, quo ad ea imitanda juventutem alacriorem redderent. . . . Quas Athenas, quam scholam, quæ alienigena studia huic domesticæ disciplinæ prætulerim? Inde oriebantur Camilli, Scipiones, Fabricii, Marcelli, Fabii." — Val. Max. ii. 1.

[3] "In conviviis pueri modesti ut cantarent carmina antiqua, in quibus laudes erant majorum, et assa voce, et cum tibicine." — Nonius, Assa voce pro sola.

The proposition, then, that Rome had ballad-poetry is not merely in itself highly probable, but is fully proved by direct evidence of the greatest weight.

This proposition being established, it becomes easy to understand why the early history of the city is unlike almost everything else in Latin literature, native where almost everything else is borrowed, imaginative where almost everything else is prosaic. We can scarcely hesitate to pronounce that the magnificent, pathetic, and truly national legends, which present so striking a contrast to all that surrounds them, are broken and defaced fragments of that early poetry which, even in the age of Cato the Censor, had become antiquated, and of which Tully had never heard a line.

That this poetry should have been suffered to perish will not appear strange when we consider how complete was the triumph of the Greek genius over the public mind of Italy. It is probable that, at an early period, Homer and Herodotus furnished some hints to the Latin Minstrels;[2] but it was not till after the war with Pyrrhus that the poetry of Rome began to put off its old Ausonian character. The transformation was soon consummated. The conquered, says Horace, led captive the conquerors. It was precisely at the time at which the Roman people rose to unrivalled political ascendency that they stooped to pass under the intellectual yoke. It was precisely at the time at which the sceptre departed from Greece that the empire of her language and of her arts became universal and despotic. The revolution indeed was not effected without a struggle. Nævius seems to have been the last of the ancient line of poets. Ennius was the founder of a new dynasty. Nævius celebrated the First Punic War in Saturnian verse, the old national verse of Italy.[1] Ennius sang the Second Punic War in

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[1] "Nosque et profestis lucibus et sacris,
Inter jocosi munera Liberi,
Cum prole matronisque nostris,
Rite Deos prius apprecati,
Virtute functos, more patrum, duces,
Lydis remixto carmine tibiis,
Trojamque, et Anchisen, et almæ
Progeniem Veneris canemus."
Carm. iv. 15.

[2] See the Preface to the Lay of the Battle of Regillus.

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[1] Cicero speaks highly in more than one place of this poem of Nævius; Ennius sneered at it, and stole from it.

As to the Saturnian measure, see Hermann's Elementa Doctrinæ Metricæ, iii. 9.

The Saturnian line, according to the grammarians, consisted of two parts. The first was a catalectic dimeter iambic; the second was composed of three trochees. But the license taken by the early Latin poets seems to have been almost boundless. The most perfect Saturnian line which has been preserved was the work, not of a professional artist, but of an amateur: —

"Dabunt malum Metelli Nævio poetæ."

There has been much difference of opinion among learned men respecting the history of this measure. That it is the same with a Greek measure used by Archilochus is indisputable. (Bentley, Phalaris, xi.) But in spite of the authority of Terentianus Maurus, and of the still higher authority of Bentley, we may venture to doubt whether the coincidence was not fortuitous. We constantly find the same rude and simple numbers in different countries, under circumstances which make it impossible to suspect that there has been imitation on either side. Bishop Heber heard the children of a village in Bengal singing "Radha, Radha," to the tune of "My Boy Billy." Neither the Castilian nor the German minstrels of the middle ages owed anything to Paros or to ancient Rome. Yet both the poem of the Cid and the poem of the Nibelungs contain many Saturnian verses, as: —

"Estas nuevas a mio Cid eran venidas."
"A mi lo dicen; a ti dan las orejadas."
"Man möhte michel wunder von Sifride sagen."
"Wa ich den Künic vinde daz sol man mir sagen."

Indeed, there cannot be a more perfect Saturnian line than one which is sung in every English nursery: —

"The queen was in her parlor eating bread and honey;"

yet the author of this line, we may be assured, borrowed nothing from either Nævius or Archilochus.

On the other hand, it is by no means improbable that, two or three hundred years before the time of Ennius, some Latin minstrel may have visited Sybaris or Crotona, may have heard some verses of Archilochus sung, may have been pleased with the metre, and may have introduced it at Rome. Thus much is certain, that the Saturnian measure, if not a numbers borrowed from the Iliad. The elder poet, in the epitaph which he wrote for himself, and which is a fine specimen of the early Roman diction and versification, plaintively boasted that the Latin language had died with him.[1] Thus, what to Horace appeared to be the first faint dawn of Roman literature appeared to Nævius to be its hopeless setting. In truth, one literature was setting, and another dawning.

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native of Italy, was at least so early and so completely naturalized there that its foreign origin was forgotten.

Bentley says indeed that the Saturnian measure was first brought from Greece into Italy by Nævius. But this is merely *obiter dictum*, to use a phrase common in our courts of law, and would not have been deliberately maintained by that incomparable critic, whose memory is held in reverence by all lovers of learning. The arguments which might be brought against Bentley's assertion — for it is mere assertion, supported by no evidence — are innumerable. A few will suffice.

1. Bentley's assertion is opposed to the testimony of Ennius. Ennius sneered at Nævius for writing on the First Punic War in verses such as the old Italian bards used before Greek literature had been studied. Now the poem of Nævius was in Saturnian verse. Is it possible that Ennius could have used such expressions, if the Saturnian verse had been just imported from Greece for the first time?

2. Bentley's assertion is opposed to the testimony of Horace. "When Greece," says Horace, "introduced her arts into our uncivilized country, those rugged Saturnian numbers passed away." Would Horace have said this if the Saturnian numbers had been imported from Greece just before the hexameter?

3. Bentley's assertion is opposed to the testimony of Festus and of Aurelius Victor, both of whom positively say that the most ancient prophecies attributed to the Fauns were in Saturnian verse.

4. Bentley's assertion is opposed to the testimony of Terentianus Maurus, to whom he has himself appealed. Terentianus Maurus does indeed say that the Saturnian measure, though believed by the Romans from a very early period ("credidit vetustas") to be of Italian invention, was really borrowed from the Greeks. But Terentianus Maurus does not say that it was first borrowed by Nævius. Nay, the expressions used by Terentianus Maurus clearly imply the contrary; for how could the Romans have believed, from a very early period, that this measure was the indigenous production of Latium, if it was really brought over from Greece in an age of intelligence and liberal curiosity, in the age which gave birth to Ennius, Plautus, Cato the Censor, and other distinguished writers? If Bentley's assertion were correct, there could have been no more doubt at Rome about the Greek origin of the Saturnian measure than about the Greek origin of hexameters, or Sapphics.

[1] Aulus Gellius, Noctes Atticæ, i. 24.

The victory of the foreign taste was decisive; and indeed we can hardly blame the Romans for turning away with contempt from the rude lays which had delighted their fathers, and giving their whole admiration to the immortal productions of Greece. The national romances, neglected by the great and the refined whose education had been finished at Rhodes or Athens, continued, it may be supposed, during some generations to delight the vulgar. While Virgil, in hexameters of exquisite modulation, described the sports of rustics, those rustics were still singing their wild Saturnian ballads.[1] It is not improbable that, at the time when Cicero lamented the irreparable loss of the poems mentioned by Cato, a search among the nooks of the Apennines, as active as the search which Sir Walter Scott made among the descendants of the mosstroopers of Liddesdale, might have brought to light many fine remains of ancient minstrelsy. No such search was made. The Latin ballads perished forever. Yet discerning critics have thought that they could still perceive in the early history of Rome numerous fragments of this lost poetry, as the traveller on classic ground sometimes finds, built into the heavy wall of a fort or convent, a pillar rich with acanthus leaves, or a frieze where the Amazons and Bacchanals seem to live. The theatres and temples of the Greek and the Roman were degraded into the quarries of the Turk and the Goth. Even so did the ancient Saturnian poetry become the quarry in which a crowd of orators and annalists found the materials for their prose.

It is not difficult to trace the process by which the old songs were transmuted into the form which they now wear. Funeral panegyric and chronicle appear to have been the intermediate links which connected the lost ballads with the histories now extant. From a very early period it was the usage that an oration should be pronounced over the remains of a noble Roman. The orator, as we learn from Polybius, was expected, on such an occasion, to recapitulate all the services which the ancestors of the deceased had, from the earliest time, rendered to the commonwealth. There can be little doubt that the speaker on whom this duty was imposed would make use of all the stories suited to his purpose which were to be found in the popular lays. There can be as little doubt that the family of an eminent man would preserve a copy of the speech which had been pronounced over his corpse. The compilers of the early chronicles would have recourse to these speeches; and the great historians of a later period would have recourse to the chronicles.

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[1] See Servius, in Georg. ii. 385.

It may be worth while to select a particular story, and to trace its probable progress through these stages. The description of the migration of the Fabian house to Cremera is one of the finest of the many fine passages which lie thick in the earlier books of Livy. The Consul, clad in his military garb, stands in the vestibule of his house, marshalling his clan, three hundred and six fighting men, all of the same proud patrician blood, all worthy to be attended by the fasces, and to command the legions. A sad and anxious retinue of friends accompanies the adventurers through the streets; but the voice of lamentation is drowned by the shouts of admiring thousands. As the procession passes the Capitol, prayers and vows are poured forth, but in vain. The devoted band, leaving Janus on the right, marches to its doom, through the Gate of Evil Luck. After achieving high deeds of valor against overwhelming numbers, all perish save one child, the stock from which the great Fabian race was destined again to spring, for the safety and glory of the commonwealth. That this fine romance, the details of which are so full of poetical truth, and so utterly destitute of all show of historical truth, came originally from some lay which had often been sung with great applause at banquets is in the highest degree probable. Nor is it difficult to imagine a mode in which the transmission might have taken place. The celebrated Quintus Fabius Maximus, who died about twenty years before the First Punic War, and more than forty years before Ennius was born, is said to have been interred with extraordinary pomp. In the eulogy pronounced over his body all the great exploits of his ancestors were doubtless recounted and exaggerated. If there were then extant songs which gave a vivid and touching description of an event, the saddest and the most glorious in the long history of the Fabian house, nothing could be more natural than that the panegyrist should borrow from such songs their finest touches, in order to adorn his speech. A few generations later the songs would perhaps be forgotten, or remembered only by shepherds and vinedressers. But the speech would certainly be preserved in the archives of the Fabian nobles. Fabius Pictor would be well acquainted with a document so interesting to his personal feelings, and would insert large extracts from it in his rude chronicle. That chronicle, as we know, was the oldest to which Livy had access. Livy would at a glance distinguish the bold strokes of the forgotten poet from the dull and feeble narrative by which they were surrounded, would retouch them with a delicate and powerful pencil, and would make them immortal.

That this might happen at Rome can scarcely be doubted; for something very like this has happened in several countries, and, among others, in our own. Perhaps the theory of Perizonius cannot be better illustrated than by showing that what he supposes to have taken place in ancient times has, beyond all doubt, taken place in modern times.

"History," says Hume with the utmost gravity, "has preserved some instances of Edgar's amours, from which, as from a specimen, we may form a conjecture of the rest." He then tells very agreeably the stories of Elfleda and Elfrida, two stories which have a most suspicious air of romance, and which, indeed, greatly resemble, in their general character, some of the legends of early Rome. He cites, as his authority for these two tales, the chronicle of William of Malmesbury, who lived in the time of King Stephen. The great majority of readers suppose that the device by which Elfleda was substituted for her young mistress, the artifice by which Athelwold obtained the hand of Elfrida, the detection of that artifice, the hunting party, and the vengeance of the amorous king, are things about which there is no more doubt than about the execution of Anne Boleyn, or the slitting of Sir John Coventry's nose. But when we turn to William of Malmesbury, we find that Hume, in his eagerness to relate these pleasant fables, has overlooked one very important circumstance. William does indeed tell both the stories; but he gives us distinct notice that he does not warrant their truth, and that they rest on no better authority than that of ballads.[1]

Such is the way in which these two well-known tales have been handed down. They originally appeared in a poetical form. They found their way from ballads into an old chronicle. The ballads perished; the chronicle remained. A great historian, some centuries after the ballads had been altogether forgotten, consulted the chronicle. He was struck by the lively coloring of these ancient fictions: he transferred them to his pages; and thus we find inserted, as unquestionable facts, in a narrative which is likely to last as long as the English tongue, the inventions of some minstrel whose works were probably never committed to writing, whose name is buried in oblivion, and whose dialect has become obsolete. It must, then, be admitted to be possible, or rather highly probable, that the stories of Romulus and Remus, and of the Horatii and Curiatti, may have had a similar origin.

Castilian literature will furnish us with another parallel case. Mariana, the classical historian of Spain, tells the story of the ill-starred marriage which the King Don Alonso brought about between the heirs of Carrion and the two daughters of the Cid. The Cid bestowed a princely dower on his sons-in-law. But the young men were base and proud, cowardly and cruel. They were tried in danger, and found wanting. They fled before the Moors, and once, when a lion broke out of his den, they ran and crouched in an unseemly hiding-place. They knew that they were despised, and took counsel how they might be avenged. They parted from their father-in-law with many signs of love, and set forth on a journey with Doña Elvira and Doña Sol. In a solitary place the bridegrooms seized their brides, stripped them, scourged them, and departed, leaving them for dead. But one of the House of Bivar, suspecting foul play, had followed the travellers in disguise. The ladies were brought back safe to the house of their father. Complaint was made to the king. It was adjudged by the Cortes that the dower given by the Cid should be returned, and that the heirs of Carrion together with one of their kindred should do battle against three knights of the party of the Cid. The guilty youths would have declined the combat; but all their shifts were vain. They were vanquished in the lists, and forever disgraced, while their injured wives were sought in marriage by great princes.[1]

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[1] "Infamias quas post dicam magis resperserunt cantilenæ." Edgar appears to have been most mercilessly treated in the Anglo-Saxon ballads. He was the favorite of the monks; and the monks and minstrels were at deadly feud.

Some Spanish writers have labored to show, by an examination of dates and circumstances, that this story is untrue. Such confutation was surely not needed; for the narrative is on the face of it a romance. How it found its way into Mariana's history is quite clear. He acknowledges his obligations to the ancient chronicles; and had doubtless before him the Cronica del famoso Cavallero Cid Ruy Diez Campeador, which had been printed as early as the year 1552. He little suspected that all the most striking passages in this chronicle were copied

[1] Mariana, lib. x. cap. 4.

from a poem of the twelfth century, — a poem of which the language and versification had long been obsolete, but which glowed with no common portion of the fire of the Iliad. Yet such was the fact. More than a century and a half after the death of Mariana, this venerable ballad, of which one imperfect copy on parchment, four hundred years old, had been preserved at Bivar, was for the first time printed. Then it was found that every interesting circumstance of the story of the heirs of Carrion was derived by the eloquent Jesuit from a song of which he had never heard, and which was composed by a minstrel whose very name had long been forgotten.[1]

Such, or nearly such, appears to have been the process by which the lost ballad-poetry of Rome was transformed into history. To reverse that process, to transform some portions of early Roman history back into the poetry out of which they were made, is the object of this work.

In the following poems the author speaks, not in his own person, but in the persons of ancient minstrels who know only what a Roman citizen, born three or four hundred years before the Christian era, may be supposed to have known, and who are in no wise above the passions and prejudices of their age and nation. To these imaginary poets must be ascribed some blunders which are so obvious that it is unnecessary to point them out. The real blunder would have been to represent these old poets as deeply versed in general history, and studious of chronological accuracy. To them must also be attributed the illiberal sneers at the Greeks, the furious party spirit, the contempt for the arts of peace, the love of war for its own sake, the ungenerous exultation over the vanquished, which the reader will sometimes observe. To portray a Roman of the age of Camillus or Curius as superior to national antipathies, as mourning over the devastation and slaughter by which empire and triumphs were to be won, as looking on human suffering with the sympathy of Howard, or as treating conquered enemies with the delicacy of the Black Prince, would be to violate all dramatic propriety. The old Romans had some great virtues, fortitude, temperance, veracity, spirit to resist oppression, respect for legitimate authority, fidelity in the observing of contracts, disinterestedness, ardent patriotism; but Christian charity and chivalrous generosity were alike unknown to them.

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[1] See the account which Sanchez gives of the Bivar manuscript in the first volume of the Coleccion de Poesias Castellanas anteriores al Siglo XV. Part of the story of the lords of Carrion, in the poem of the Cid, has been translated by Mr. Frere in a manner above all praise.

It would have been obviously improper to mimic the manner of any particular age or country. Something has been borrowed, however, from our own old ballads, and more from Sir Walter Scott, the great restorer of our ballad-poetry. To the Iliad still greater obligations are due; and those obligations have been contracted with the less hesitation, because there is reason to believe that some of the old Latin minstrels really had recourse to that inexhaustible store of poetical images.

It would have been easy to swell this little volume to a very considerable bulk, by appending notes filled with quotations; but to a learned reader such notes are not necessary; for an unlearned reader they would have little interest; and the judgment passed both by the learned and by the unlearned on a work of the imagination will always depend much more on the general character and spirit of such a work than on minute details.

HORATIUS

There can be little doubt that among those parts of early Roman history which had a poetical origin was the legend of Horatius Cocles. We have several versions of the story, and these versions differ from each other in points of no small importance. Polybius, there is reason to believe, heard the tale recited over the remains of some Consul or Prætor descended from the old Horatian patricians; for he introduces it as a specimen of the narratives with which the Romans were in the habit of embellishing their funeral oratory. It is remarkable that, according to him, Horatius defended the bridge alone, and perished in the waters. According to the chronicles which Livy and Dionysius followed, Horatius had two companions, swam safe to shore, and was loaded with honors and rewards.

These discrepancies are easily explained. Our own literature, indeed, will furnish an exact parallel to what may have taken place at Rome. It is highly probable that the memory of the war of Porsena was preserved by compositions much resembling the two ballads which stand first in the Relics of Ancient English Poetry. In both those ballads the English, commanded by the Percy, fight with the Scots, commanded by the Douglas. In one of the ballads the Douglas is killed by a nameless English archer, and the Percy by a Scottish spearman; in the other, the Percy slays the Douglas in single combat, and is himself made prisoner. In the former, Sir Hugh Montgomery is shot through the heart by a Northumbrian bowman; in the latter he is taken and exchanged for the Percy. Yet both the ballads relate to the same event, and that an event which probably took place within the memory of persons who were alive when both the ballads were made. One of the minstrels says: —

"Old men that knowen the grounde well yenoughe
Call it the battell of Otterburn:
At Otterburn began this spurne
Upon a monnyn day.
Ther was the dougghte Doglas slean:
The Perse never went away."

The other poet sums up the event in the following lines:

"Thys fraye bygan at Otterborne
Bytwene the nyghte and the day:
Ther the Dowglas lost hys lyfe,
And the Percy was lede away."

It is by no means unlikely that there were two old Roman lays about the defence of the bridge; and that, while the story which Livy has transmitted to us was preferred by the multitude, the other, which ascribed the whole glory to Horatius alone, may have been the favorite with the Horatian house.

The following ballad is supposed to have been made about a hundred and twenty years after the war which it celebrates, and just before the taking of Rome by the Gauls. The author seems to have been an honest citizen, proud of the military glory of his country, sick of the disputes of factions, and much given to pining after good old times which had never really existed. The allusion, however, to the partial manner in which the public lands were allotted could proceed only from a plebeian; and the allusion to the fraudulent sale of spoils marks the date of the poem, and shows that the poet shared in the general discontent with which the proceedings of Camillus, after the taking of Veii, were regarded.

The penultimate syllable of the name Porsena has been shortened in spite of the authority of Niebuhr, who pronounces, without assigning any ground for his opinion, that Martial was guilty of a decided blunder in the line,

"Hanc spectare manum Porsena non potuit."

It is not easy to understand how any modern scholar, whatever his attainments may be, — and those of Niebuhr were undoubtedly immense, — can venture to pronounce that Martial did not know the quantity of a word which he must have uttered, and heard uttered, a hundred times before he left school. Niebuhr seems also to have forgotten that Martial has fellow culprits to keep him in countenance. Horace has committed the same decided blunder; for he gives us, as a pure iambic line, —

> "Minacis aut Etrusca Porsenæ manus."

Silius Italicus has repeatedly offended in the same way, as when he says, —

> "Cernitur effugiens ardentem Porsena dextram;"

and again, —

> "Clusinum vulgus, cum, Porsena magne, jubebas."

A modern writer may be content to err in such company.

Niebuhr's supposition that each of the three defenders of the bridge was the representative of one of the three patrician tribes is both ingenious and probable, and has been adopted in the following poem.

HORATIUS

A LAY MADE ABOUT THE YEAR OF THE CITY CCCLX

I

Lars Porsena of Clusium
  By the Nine Gods he swore
That the great house of Tarquin
  Should suffer wrong no more.
By the Nine Gods he swore it,
  And named a trysting day,
And bade his messengers ride forth,
East and west and south and north,
  To summon his array.

II

East and west and south and north
  The messengers ride fast,
And tower and town and cottage
  Have heard the trumpet's blast.
Shame on the false Etruscan
  Who lingers in his home,
When Porsena of Clusium
  Is on the march for Rome.

III

The horsemen and the footmen
  Are pouring in amain
From many a stately market-place,
  From many a fruitful plain,
From many a lonely hamlet,
  Which, hid by beech and pine,

Like an eagle's nest, hangs on the crest
  Of purple Apennine;

IV

From lordly Volaterræ,
  Where scowls the far-famed hold
Piled by the hands of giants
  For godlike kings of old;
From seagirt Populonia,
  Whose sentinels descry
Sardinia's snowy mountain-tops
  Fringing the southern sky;

V

From the proud mart of Pisæ,
  Queen of the western waves,
Where ride Massilia's triremes
  Heavy with fair-haired slaves;
From where sweet Clanis wanders
  Through corn and vines and flowers;
From where Cortona lifts to heaven
  Her diadem of towers.

VI

Tall are the oaks whose acorns
  Drop in dark Auser's rill;
Fat are the stags that champ the boughs
  Of the Ciminian hill;
Beyond all streams Clitumnus
  Is to the herdsman dear;
Best of all pools the fowler loves
  The great Volsinian mere.

VII

But now no stroke of woodman
  Is heard by Auser's rill;

No hunter tracks the stag's green path
Up the Ciminian hill;
Unwatched along Clitumnus
Grazes the milk-white steer;
Unharmed the water fowl may dip
In the Volsinian mere.

VIII

The harvests of Arretium,
This year, old men shall reap;
This year, young boys in Umbro
Shall plunge the struggling sheep;
And in the vats of Luna,
This year, the must shall foam
Round the white feet of laughing girls
Whose sires have marched to Rome.

IX

There be thirty chosen prophets,
The wisest of the land,
Who alway by Lars Porsena
Both morn and evening stand:
Evening and morn the Thirty
Have turned the verses o'er,
Traced from the right on linen white
By mighty seers of yore.

X

And with one voice the Thirty
Have their glad answer given:
"Go forth, go forth, Lars Porsena;
Go forth, beloved of Heaven;
Go, and return in glory
To Clusium's royal dome;
And hang round Nurscia's altars
The golden shields of Rome."

XI

And now hath every city
  Sent up her tale of men ;
The foot are fourscore thousand,
  The horse are thousands ten.
Before the gates of Sutrium
  Is met the great array.
A proud man was Lars Porsena
  Upon the trysting day.

XII

For all the Etruscan armies
  Were ranged beneath his eye,
And many a banished Roman,
  And many a stout ally ;
And with a mighty following
  To join the muster came
The Tusculan Mamilius,
  Prince of the Latian name.

XIII

But by the yellow Tiber
  Was tumult and affright:
From all the spacious champaign
  To Rome men took their flight.
A mile around the city,
  The throng stopped up the ways ;
A fearful sight it was to see
  Through two long nights and days.

XIV

For aged folks on crutches,
  And women great with child,
And mothers sobbing over babes
  That clung to them and smiled,
And sick men borne in litters
  High on the necks of slaves,

And troops of sun-burned husbandmen
With reaping-hooks and staves,

XV

And droves of mules and asses
Laden with skins of wine,
And endless flocks of goats and sheep,
And endless herds of kine,
And endless trains of wagons
That creaked beneath the weight
Of corn-sacks and of household goods,
Choked every roaring gate.

XVI

Now, from the rock Tarpeian,
Could the wan burghers spy
The line of blazing villages
Red in the midnight sky.
The Fathers of the City,
They sat all night and day,
For every hour some horseman came
With tidings of dismay.

XVII

To eastward and to westward
Have spread the Tuscan bands ;
Nor house, nor fence, nor dovecote
In Crustumerium stands.
Verbenna down to Ostia
Hath wasted all the plain ;
Astur hath stormed Janiculum,
And the stout guards are slain.

XVIII

I wis, in all the Senate,
There was no heart so bold,

But sore it ached, and fast it beat,
When that ill news was told.
Forthwith up rose the Consul,
Up rose the Fathers all;
In haste they girded up their gowns,
And hied them to the wall.

XIX

They held a council standing,
Before the River-Gate;
Short time was there, ye well may guess,
For musing or debate.
Out spake the Consul roundly:
"The bridge must straight go down;
For, since Janiculum is lost,
Nought else can save the town."

XX

Just then a scout came flying,
All wild with haste and fear:
"To arms! to arms! Sir Consul:
Lars Porsena is here."
On the low hills to westward
The Consul fixed his eye,
And saw the swarthy storm of dust
Rise fast along the sky.

XXI

And nearer fast and nearer
Doth the red whirlwind come;
And louder still and still more loud,
From underneath that rolling cloud,
Is heard the trumpet's war-note proud,
The trampling, and the hum.
And plainly and more plainly
Now through the gloom appears,
Far to left and far to right,

In broken gleams of dark-blue light,
The long array of helmets bright,
The long array of spears.

XXII

And plainly and more plainly,
Above that glimmering line,
Now might ye see the banners
Of twelve fair cities shine;
But the banner of proud Clusium
Was highest of them all,
The terror of the Umbrian,
The terror of the Gaul.

XXIII

And plainly and more plainly
Now might the burghers know,
By port and vest, by horse and crest,
Each warlike Lucumo.
There Cilnius of Arretium
On his fleet roan was seen;
And Astur of the four-fold shield,
Girt with the brand none else may wield,
Tolumnius with the belt of gold,
And dark Verbenna from the hold
By reedy Thrasymene.

XXIV

Fast by the royal standard,
O'erlooking all the war,
Lars Porsena of Clusium
Sat in his ivory car.
By the right wheel rode Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name;
And by the left false Sextus,
That wrought the deed of shame.

XXV

But when the face of Sextus
Was seen among the foes,
A yell that rent the firmament
From all the town arose.
On the house-tops was no woman
But spat towards him and hissed,
No child but screamed out curses,
And shook its little fist.

XXVI

But the Consul's brow was sad,
And the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall,
And darkly at the foe.
"Their van will be upon us
Before the bridge goes down;
And if they once may win the bridge,
What hope to save the town?"

XXVII

Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the Gate:
"To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
And the temples of his gods,

XXVIII

"And for the tender mother
Who dandled him to rest,
And for the wife who nurses
His baby at her breast,
And for the holy maidens
Who feed the eternal flame,

To save them from false Sextus
  That wrought the deed of shame?

XXIX

"Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
  With all the speed ye may;
I, with two more to help me,
  Will hold the foe in play.
In yon strait path a thousand
  May well be stopped by three.
Now who will stand on either hand,
  And keep the bridge with me?"

XXX

Then out spake Spurius Lartius;
  A Ramnian proud was he:
"Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
  And keep the bridge with thee."
And out spake strong Herminius;
  Of Titian blood was he:
"I will abide on thy left side,
  And keep the bridge with thee."

XXXI

"Horatius," quoth the Consul,
  "As thou sayest, so let it be."
And straight against that great array
  Forth went the dauntless Three.
For Romans in Rome's quarrel
  Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life,
  In the brave days of old.

XXXII

Then none was for a party;
  Then all were for the state;
Then the great man helped the poor,
  And the poor man loved the great:

Then lands were fairly portioned;
  Then spoils were fairly sold:
The Romans were like brothers
  In the brave days of old.

XXXIII

Now Roman is to Roman
  More hateful than a foe,
And the Tribunes beard the high,
  And the Fathers grind the low.
As we wax hot in faction,
  In battle we wax cold:
Wherefore men fight not as they fought
  In the brave days of old.

XXXIV

Now while the Three were tightening
  Their harness on their backs,
The Consul was the foremost man
  To take in hand an axe:
And Fathers mixed with Commons
  Seized hatchet, bar, and crow,
And smote upon the planks above,
  And loosed the props below.

XXXV

Meanwhile the Tuscan army,
  Right glorious to behold,
Come flashing back the noonday light,
Rank behind rank, like surges bright
  Of a broad sea of gold.
Four hundred trumpets sounded
  A peal of warlike glee,
As that great host, with measured tread,
And spears advanced, and ensigns spread,
Rolled slowly towards the bridge's head,
  Where stood the dauntless Three.

XXXVI

The Three stood calm and silent,
  And looked upon the foes,
And a great shout of laughter
  From all the vanguard rose:
And forth three chiefs came spurring
  Before that deep array;
To earth they sprang, their swords they drew,
And lifted high their shields, and flew
  To win the narrow way;

XXXVII

Aunus from green Tifernum,
  Lord of the Hill of Vines;
And Seius, whose eight hundred slaves
  Sicken in Ilva's mines;
And Picus, long to Clusium
  Vassal in peace and war,
Who led to fight his Umbrian powers
From that gray crag where, girt with towers,
The fortress of Nequinum lowers
  O'er the pale waves of Nar.

XXXVIII

Stout Lartius hurled down Aunus
  Into the stream beneath;
Herminius struck at Seius,
  And clove him to the teeth;
At Picus brave Horatius
  Darted one fiery thrust;
And the proud Umbrian's gilded arms
  Clashed in the bloody dust.

XXXIX

Then Ocnus of Falerii
  Rushed on the Roman Three;

And Lausulus of Urgo,
The rover of the sea;
And Aruns of Volsinium,
Who slew the great wild boar,
The great wild boar that had his den
Amidst the reeds of Cosa's fen,
And wasted fields, and slaughtered men,
Along Albinia's shore.

XL

Herminius smote down Aruns:
Lartius laid Ocnus low:
Right to the heart of Lausulus
Horatius sent a blow.
"Lie there," he cried, "fell pirate!
No more, aghast and pale,
From Ostia's walls the crowd shall mark
The track of thy destroying bark.
No more Campania's hinds shall fly
To woods and caverns when they spy
Thy thrice accursed sail."

XLI

But now no sound of laughter
Was heard among the foes.
A wild and wrathful clamor
From all the vanguard rose.
Six spears' lengths from the entrance
Halted that deep array,
And for a space no man came forth
To win the narrow way.

XLII

But hark! the cry is Astur:
And lo! the ranks divide;
And the great Lord of Luna
Comes with his stately stride.

Upon his ample shoulders
  Clangs loud the four-fold shield,
And in his hand he shakes the brand
  Which none but he can wield.

XLIII

He smiled on those bold Romans
  A smile serene and high;
He eyed the flinching Tuscans,
  And scorn was in his eye.
Quoth he, "The she-wolf's litter
  Stand savagely at bay:
But will ye dare to follow,
  If Astur clears the way?"

XLIV

Then, whirling up his broadsword
  With both hands to the height,
He rushed against Horatius,
  And smote with all his might.
With shield and blade Horatius
  Right deftly turned the blow.
The blow, though turned, came yet too nigh;
It missed his helm, but gashed his thigh:
The Tuscans raised a joyful cry
  To see the red blood flow.

XLV

He reeled, and on Herminius
  He leaned one breathing-space;
Then, like a wild cat mad with wounds,
  Sprang right at Astur's face.
Through teeth, and skull, and helmet
  So fierce a thrust he sped,
The good sword stood a hand-breadth out
  Behind the Tuscan's head.

XLVI

And the great Lord of Luna
  Fell at that deadly stroke,
As falls on Mount Alvernus
  A thunder smitten oak.
Far o'er the crashing forest
  The giant arms lie spread;
And the pale augurs, muttering low,
  Gaze on the blasted head.

XLVII

On Astur's throat Horatius
  Right firmly pressed his heel,
And thrice and four times tugged amain,
  Ere he wrenched out the steel.
"And see," he cried, "the welcome,
  Fair guests, that waits you here!
What noble Lucumo comes next
  To taste our Roman cheer?"

XLVIII

But at his haughty challenge
  A sullen murmur ran,
Mingled of wrath, and shame, and dread,
  Along that glittering van.
There lacked not men of prowess,
  Nor men of lordly race;
For all Etruria's noblest
  Were round the fatal place.

XLIX

But all Etruria's noblest
  Felt their hearts sink to see
On the earth the bloody corpses,
  In the path the dauntless Three:
And, from the ghastly entrance
  Where those bold Romans stood,

All shrank, like boys who unaware,
Ranging the woods to start a hare,
Come to the mouth of the dark lair
Where, growling low, a fierce old bear
  Lies amidst bones and blood.

L

Was none who would be foremost
  To lead such dire attack;
But those behind cried, "Forward!"
  And those before cried, "Back!"
And backward now and forward
  Wavers the deep array;
And on the tossing sea of steel,
To and fro the standards reel;
And the victorious trumpet-peal
  Dies fitfully away.

LI

Yet one man for one moment
  Strode out before the crowd;
Well known was he to all the Three,
  And they gave him greeting loud.
"Now welcome, welcome, Sextus!
  Now welcome to thy home!
Why dost thou stay, and turn away?
  Here lies the road to Rome."

LII

Thrice looked he at the city;
  Thrice looked he at the dead;
And thrice came on in fury,
  And thrice turned back in dread:
And, white with fear and hatred,
  Scowled at the narrow way
Where, wallowing in a pool of blood,
  The bravest Tuscans lay.

LIII

But meanwhile axe and lever
  Have manfully been plied;
And now the bridge hangs tottering
  Above the boiling tide.
"Come back, come back, Horatius!"
  Loud cried the Fathers all.
"Back, Lartius! back, Herminius!
  Back, ere the ruin fall!"

LIV

Back darted Spurius Lartius;
  Herminius darted back:
And, as they passed, beneath their feet
  They felt the timbers crack.
But when they turned their faces,
  And on the farther shore
Saw brave Horatius stand alone,
  They would have crossed once more.

LV

But with a crash like thunder
  Fell every loosened beam,
And, like a dam, the mighty wreck
  Lay right athwart the stream:
And a long shout of triumph
  Rose from the walls of Rome,
As to the highest turret-tops
  Was splashed the yellow foam.

LVI

And, like a horse unbroken
  When first he feels the rein,
The furious river struggled hard,
  And tossed his tawny mane,
And burst the curb and bounded,
  Rejoicing to be free,

And whirling down, in fierce career,
Battlement, and plank, and pier,
Rushed headlong to the sea.

LVII

Alone stood brave Horatius,
But constant still in mind;
Thrice thirty thousand foes before,
And the broad flood behind.
"Down with him!" cried false Sextus,
With a smile on his pale face.
"Now yield thee," cried Lars Porsena,
"Now yield thee to our grace."

LVIII

Round turned he, as not deigning
Those craven ranks to see;
Nought spake he to Lars Porsena,
To Sextus nought spake he;
But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home;
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of Rome.

LIX

"Oh, Tiber! father Tiber!
To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms,
Take thou in charge this day!"
So he spake, and speaking sheathed
The good sword by his side,
And with his harness on his back,
Plunged headlong in the tide.

LX

No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank;

But friends and foes in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,
  Stood gazing where he sank;
And when above the surges
  They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,
And even the ranks of Tuscany
  Could scarce forbear to cheer.

LXI

But fiercely ran the current,
  Swollen high by months of rain:
And fast his blood was flowing;
  And he was sore in pain,
And heavy with his armor,
  And spent with changing blows:
And oft they thought him sinking,
  But still again he rose.

LXII

Never, I ween, did swimmer,
  In such an evil case,
Struggle through such a raging flood
  Safe to the landing place:
But his limbs were borne up bravely
  By the brave heart within,
And our good father Tiber
  Bare bravely up his chin.[1]

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[1] "Our ladye bare upp her chinne."
Ballad of Childe Waters.

"Never heavier man and horse
Stemmed a midnight torrent's force;

. . . .

Yet, through good heart and our Lady's grace,
At length he gained the landing place."
Lay of the Last Minstrel, I.

LXIII

"Curse on him!" quoth false Sextus;
"Will not the villain drown?
But for this stay, ere close of day
We should have sacked the town!"
'Heaven help him!" quoth Lars Porsena
"And bring him safe to shore;
For such a gallant feat of arms
Was never seen before."

LXIV

And now he feels the bottom;
Now on dry earth he stands;
Now round him throng the Fathers;
To press his gory hands;
And now, with shouts and clapping,
And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River-Gate,
Borne by the joyous crowd.

LXV

They gave him of the corn-land,
That was of public right,
As much as two strong oxen
Could plough from morn till night;
And they made a molten image,
And set it up on high,
And there it stands unto this day
To witness if I lie.

LXVI

It stands in the Comitium,
Plain for all folk to see;
Horatius in his harness,
Halting upon one knee:
And underneath is written,
In letters all of gold,

How valiantly he kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

LXVII

And still his name sounds stirring
Unto the men of Rome,
As the trumpet-blast that cries to them
To charge the Volscian home;
And wives still pray to Juno
For boys with hearts as bold
As his who kept the bridge so well
In the brave days of old.

LXVIII

And in the nights of winter,
When the cold north winds blow,
And the long howling of the wolves
Is heard amidst the snow;
When round the lonely cottage
Roars loud the tempest's din,
And the good logs of Algidus
Roar louder yet within;

LXIX

When the oldest cask is opened,
And the largest lamp is lit;
When the chestnuts glow in the embers,
And the kid turns on the spit;
When young and old in circle
Around the firebrands close;
When the girls are weaving baskets,
And the lads are shaping bows;

LXX

When the goodman mends his armor,
And trims his helmet's plume;
When the goodwife's shuttle merrily
Goes flashing through the loom;

With weeping and with laughter
  Still is the story told,
How well Horatius kept the bridge
  In the brave days of old.

THE BATTLE OF THE LAKE REGILLUS

The following poem is supposed to have been produced about ninety years after the lay of Horatius. Some persons mentioned in the lay of Horatius make their appearance again, and some appellations and epithets used in the lay of Horatius have been purposely repeated: for, in an age of ballad-poetry, it scarcely ever fails to happen, that certain phrases come to be appropriated to certain men and things, and are regularly applied to those men and things by every minstrel. Thus we find, both in the Homeric poems and in Hesiod, *βίη Ἡρακληείη*, *περικλύτος Ἀμφιγυήεις*, *διάκτορος Ἀργειφόντης*, *ἑπτάπυλος Θήβη*, *Ἑλένης ἕνεκ' ἠϋκόμοιο*. Thus, too, in our own national songs, Douglas is almost always the doughty Douglas; England is merry England; all the gold is red; and all the ladies are gay.

The principal distinction between the lay of Horatius and the lay of the Lake Regillus is that the former is meant to be purely Roman, while the latter, though national in its general spirit, has a slight tincture of Greek learning and of Greek superstition. The story of the Tarquins, as it has come down to us, appears to have been compiled from the works of several popular poets; and one, at least, of those poets appears to have visited the Greek colonies in Italy, if not Greece itself, and to have had some acquaintance with the works of Homer and Herodotus. Many of the most striking adventures of the House of Tarquin, before Lucretia makes her appearance, have a Greek character. The Tarquins themselves are represented as Corinthian nobles of the great House of the Bacchiadæ, driven from their country by the tyranny of that Cypselus, the tale of whose strange escape

Herodotus has related with incomparable simplicity and liveliness.[1] Livy and Dionysius tell us that, when Tarquin the Proud was asked what was the best mode of governing a conquered city, he replied only by beating down with his staff all the tallest poppies in his garden.[2] This is exactly what Herodotus, in the passage to which reference has already been made, relates of the counsel given to Periander, the son of Cypselus. The stratagem by which the town of Gabii is brought under the power of the Tarquins is, again, obviously copied from Herodotus.[3] The embassy of the young Tarquins to the oracle at Delphi is just such a story as would be told by a poet whose head was full of the Greek mythology; and the ambiguous answer returned by Apollo is in the exact style of the prophecies which, according to Herodotus, lured Crœsus to destruction. Then the character of the narrative changes. From the first mention of Lucretia to the retreat of Porsena nothing seems to be borrowed from foreign sources. The villainy of Sextus, the suicide of his victim, the revolution, the death of the sons of Brutus, the defence of the bridge, Mucius burning his hand,[4] Clœlia swimming through Tiber, seem to be all strictly Roman. But when we have done with the Tuscan war, and enter upon the war with the Latines, we are again struck by the Greek air of the story. The Battle of the Lake Regillus is in all respects a Homeric battle, except that the combatants ride astride on their horses, instead of driving chariots. The mass of fighting men is hardly mentioned. The leaders single each other out, and engage hand to hand. The great object of the warriors on both sides is, as in the Iliad, to obtain possession of the spoils and bodies of the slain; and several circumstances are related which forcibly remind us of the great slaughter round the corpses of Sarpedon and Patroclus.

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[1] Herodotus, v. 92. Livy, i. 54. Dionysius, iii. 46.

[2] Livy, i. 54. Dionysius, iv. 56.

[3] Herodotus, iii. 154. Livy, i. 53.

[4] M. de Pouilly attempted, a hundred and twenty years ago, to prove that the story of Mucius was of Greek origin; but he was signally confuted by the Abbé Sallier. See the Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions, vi. 27, 66.

But there is one circumstance which deserves especial notice. Both the war of Troy and the war of Regillus were caused by the licentious passions of young princes, who were therefore peculiarly bound not to be sparing of their own persons in the day of battle. Now the conduct of Sextus at Regillus, as described by Livy, so exactly resembles that of Paris, as described at the beginning of the third book of the Iliad, that it is difficult to believe the resemblance accidental. Paris appears before the Trojan ranks, defying the bravest Greek to encounter him:—

> *Τρωσὶν μὲν προμάχιζεν Ἀλέξανδρος θεοειδὴς,*
> *. . . Ἀργείων προκαλίζετο πάντας ἀρίστους,*
> *ἀντίβιον μαχέσασθαι ἐν αἰνῇ δηϊοτῆτι.*

Livy introduces Sextus in a similar manner: "Ferocem juvenem Tarquinium, ostentantem se in prima exsulum acie." Menelaus rushes to meet Paris. A Roman noble, eager for vengeance, spurs his horse towards Sextus. Both the guilty princes are instantly terror-stricken:—

> *Τὸν δ' ὡς οὖν ἐνόησεν Ἀλέξανδρος θεοειδὴς*
> *ἐν προμάχοισι φανέντα, κατεπλήγη φίλον ἦτορ·*
> *ἂψ δ' ἑτάρων εἰς ἔθνος ἐχάζετο κῆρ' ἀλεείνων.*

"Tarquinius," says Livy, "retro in agmen suorum infenso cessit hosti." If this be a fortuitous coincidence, it is one of the most extraordinary in literature.

In the following poem, therefore, images and incidents have been borrowed, not merely without scruple, but on principle, from the incomparable battle-pieces of Homer.

The popular belief at Rome, from an early period, seems to have been that the event of the great day of Regillus was decided by supernatural agency. Castor and Pollux, it was said, had fought armed and mounted, at the head of the legions of the commonwealth, and had afterwards carried the news of the victory with incredible speed to the city. The well in the Forum at which they had alighted was pointed out. Near the well rose their ancient temple. A great festival was kept to their honor on the Ides of Quintilis, supposed to be the anniversary of the battle; and on that day sumptuous sacrifices were offered to them at the public charge. One spot on the margin of Lake Regillus was regarded during many ages with superstitious awe. A mark, resembling in shape a horse's hoof, was discernible in the volcanic rock; and this mark was believed to have been made by one of the celestial chargers.

How the legend originated cannot now be ascertained; but we may easily imagine several ways in which it might have originated; nor is it at all necessary to suppose, with Julius Frontinus, that two young men were dressed up by the Dictator to personate the sons of Leda. It is probable that Livy is correct when he says that the Roman general, in the hour of peril, vowed a temple to Castor. If so, nothing could be more natural than that the multitude should ascribe the victory to the favor of the Twin Gods. When such was the prevailing sentiment, any man who chose to declare that, in the midst of the confusion and slaughter, he had seen two godlike forms on white horses scattering the Latines, would find ready credence. We know, indeed, that in modern times a very similar story actually found credence among a people much more civilized than the Romans of the fifth century before Christ. A chaplain of Cortes, writing about thirty years after the conquest of Mexico, in an age of printing presses, libraries, universities, scholars, logicians, jurists, and statesmen, had the face to assert that, in one engagement against the Indians, St. James had appeared on a gray horse at the head of the Castilian adventurers. Many of those adventurers were living when this lie was printed. One of them, honest Bernal Diaz, wrote an account of the expedition. He had the evidence of his own senses against the legend; but he seems to have distrusted even the evidence of his own senses. He says that he was in the battle, and that he saw a gray horse with a man on his back, but that the man was, to his thinking, Francesco de Morla, and not the ever-blessed apostle St. James. "Nevertheless," Bernal adds, "it may be that the person on the gray horse was the glorious apostle St. James, and that I, sinner that I am, was unworthy to see him." The Romans of the age of Cincinnatus were probably quite as credulous as the Spanish subjects of Charles the Fifth. It is therefore conceivable that the appearance of Castor and Pollux may have become an article of faith before the generation which had fought at Regillus had passed away. Nor could anything be more natural than that the poets of the next age should embellish this story, and make the celestial horsemen bear the tidings of victory to Rome.

Many years after the temple of the Twin Gods had been built in the Forum, an important addition was made to the ceremonial by which the state annually testified its gratitude for their protection. Quintus Fabius and Publius Decius were elected Censors at a momentous crisis. It had become absolutely necessary that the classification of the citizens should be revised. On that classification depended the distribution of political power. Party spirit ran high; and the republic seemed to be in danger of falling under the dominion either of a narrow oligarchy or of an ignorant and headstrong rabble. Under such circumstances, the most illustrious patrician and the most illustrious plebeian of the age were entrusted with the office of arbitrating between the angry factions; and they performed their arduous task to the satisfaction of all honest and reasonable men.

One of their reforms was a remodelling of the equestrian order; and, having effected this reform, they determined to give to their work a sanction derived from religion. In the chivalrous societies of modern times, — societies which have much more than may at first sight appear in common with the equestrian order of Rome, — it has been usual to invoke the special protection of some Saint, and to observe his day with peculiar solemnity. Thus the Companions of the Garter wear the image of St. George depending from their collars, and meet, on great occasions, in St. George's Chapel. Thus, when Louis the Fourteenth instituted a new order of chivalry for the rewarding of military merit, he commended it to the favor of his own glorified ancestor and patron, and decreed that all the members of the fraternity should meet at the royal palace on the feast of St. Louis, should attend the king to chapel, should hear mass, and should subsequently hold their great annual assembly. There is a considerable resemblance between this rule of the order of St. Louis and the rule which Fabius and Decius made respecting the Roman knights. It was ordained that a grand muster and inspection of the equestrian body should be part of the ceremonial performed, on the anniversary of the battle of Regillus, in honor of Castor and Pollux, the two equestrian gods. All the knights, clad in purple and crowned with olive, were to meet at a temple of Mars in the suburbs. Thence they were to ride in state to the Forum, where the temple of the Twins stood. This pageant was, during several centuries, considered as one of the most splendid sights of Rome. In the time of Dionysius the cavalcade sometimes consisted of five thousand horsemen, all persons of fair repute and easy fortune.[1]

There can be no doubt that the Censors who instituted this august ceremony acted in concert with the Pontiffs to whom, by the constitution of Rome, the superintendence of the public worship belonged; and it is probable that those high religious functionaries were, as usual, fortunate enough to find in their books or traditions some warrant for the innovation.

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[1] See Livy, ix. 46. Val. Max. ii. 2. Aurel. Vict. De Viris Illustribus, 32. Dionysius, vi. 13. Plin. Hist. Nat. xv. 5. See also the singularly ingenious chapter in Niebuhr's posthumous volume, Die Censur des Q. Fabius und P. Decius.

The following poem is supposed to have been made for this great occasion. Songs, we know, were chanted at the religious festivals of Rome from an early period, indeed from so early a period that some of the sacred verses were popularly ascribed to Numa, and were utterly unintelligible in the age of Augustus. In the Second Punic War a great feast was held in honor of Juno, and a song was sung in her praise. This song was extant when Livy wrote; and, though exceedingly rugged and uncouth, seemed to him not wholly destitute of merit.[1] A song, as we learn from Horace,[2] was part of the established ritual at the great Secular Jubilee. It is therefore likely that the Censors and Pontiffs, when they had resolved to add a grand procession of knights to the other solemnities annually performed on the Ides of Quintilis, would call in the aid of a poet. Such a poet would naturally take for his subject the battle of Regillus, the appearance of the Twin Gods, and the institution of their festival. He would find abundant materials in the ballads of his predecessors; and he would make free use of the scanty stock of Greek learning which he had himself acquired. He would probably introduce some wise and holy Pontiff enjoining the magnificent ceremonial which, after a long interval, had at length been adopted. If the poem succeeded, many persons would commit it to memory. Parts of it would be sung to the pipe at banquets. It would be peculiarly interesting to the great Posthumian House, which numbered among its many images that of the Dictator Aulus, the hero of Regillus. The orator who, in the following generation, pronounced the funeral panegyric over the remains of Lucius Posthumius Megellus, thrice Consul, would borrow largely from the lay; and thus some passages, much disfigured, would probably find their way into the chronicles which were afterwards in the hands of Dionysius and Livy.

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[1] Livy, xxvii. 37.

[2] Hor. Carmen Seculare.

Antiquaries differ widely as to the situation of the field of battle. The opinion of those who suppose that the armies met near Cornufelle, between Frascati and the Monte Porzio, is at least plausible, and has been followed in the poem.

As to the details of the battle, it has not been thought desirable to adhere minutely to the accounts which have come down to us. Those accounts, indeed, differ widely from each other, and, in all probability, differ as widely from the ancient poem from which they were originally derived.

It is unnecessary to point out the obvious imitations of the Iliad, which have been purposely introduced.

THE BATTLE OF THE LAKE REGILLUS

A LAY SUNG AT THE FEAST OF CASTOR AND POLLUX ON THE IDES OF QUINTILIS IN THE YEAR OF THE CITY CCCCLI

I

Ho, trumpets, sound a war-note!
Ho, lictors, clear the way!
The Knights will ride, in all their pride,
Along the streets to-day.
To-day the doors and windows
Are hung with garlands all,
From Castor in the Forum,
To Mars without the wall.
Each Knight is robed in purple,
With olive each is crowned;
A gallant war-horse under each
Paws haughtily the ground.
While flows the Yellow River,
While stands the Sacred Hill,
The proud Ides of Quintilis
Shall have such honor still.
Gay are the Martian Kalends,
December's Nones are gay,
But the proud Ides, when the squadron rides,
Shall be Rome's whitest day.

II

Unto the Great Twin Brethren
We keep this solemn feast.

Swift, swift, the Great Twin Brethren
  Came spurring from the east.
They came o'er wild Parthenius
  Tossing in waves of pine,
O'er Cirrha's dome, o'er Adria's foam,
  O'er purple Apennine,
From where with flutes and dances
  Their ancient mansion rings,
In lordly Lacedæmon,
  The City of two kings,
To where, by Lake Regillus,
  Under the Porcian height,
All in the lands of Tusculum,
  Was fought the glorious fight.

III

Now on the place of slaughter
  Are cots and sheepfolds seen,
And rows of vines, and fields of wheat,
  And apple-orchards green;
The swine crush the big acorns
  That fall from Corne's oaks.
Upon the turf by the Fair Fount
  The reaper's pottage smokes.
The fisher baits his angle;
  The hunter twangs his bow;
Little they think on those strong limbs
  That moulder deep below.
Little they think how sternly
  That day the trumpets pealed;
How in the slippery swamp of blood
  Warrior and war-horse reeled;
How wolves came with fierce gallop,
  And crows on eager wings,
To tear the flesh of captains,
  And peck the eyes of kings;
How thick the dead lay scattered
  Under the Porcian height;

How through the gates of Tusculum
  Raved the wild stream of flight;
And how the Lake Regillus
  Bubbled with crimson foam,
What time the Thirty Cities
  Came forth to war with Rome.

IV

But, Roman, when thou standest
  Upon that holy ground,
Look thou with heed on the dark rock
  That girds the dark lake round.
So shalt thou see a hoof-mark
  Stamped deep into the flint:
It was no hoof of mortal steed
  That made so strange a dint:
There to the Great Twin Brethren
  Vow thou thy vows, and pray
That they, in tempest and in fight,
  Will keep thy head alway.

V

Since last the Great Twin Brethren
  Of mortal eyes were seen,
Have years gone by an hundred
  And fourscore and thirteen.
That summer a Virginius
  Was Consul first in place;
The second was stout Aulus,
  Of the Posthumian race.
The Herald of the Latines
  From Gabii came in state:
The Herald of the Latines
  Passed through Rome's Eastern Gate:
The Herald of the Latines
  Did in our Forum stand;
And there he did his office,
  A sceptre in his hand.

VI

"Hear, Senators and people
Of the good town of Rome,
The Thirty Cities charge you
To bring the Tarquins home:
And if ye still be stubborn
To work the Tarquins wrong,
The Thirty Cities warn you,
Look that your walls be strong."

VII

Then spake the Consul Aulus,
He spake a bitter jest:
"Once the jays sent a message
Unto the eagle's nest:—
Now yield thou up thine eyrie
Unto the carrion-kite,
Or come forth valiantly, and face
The jays in deadly fight.—
Forth looked in wrath the eagle;
And carrion-kite and jay,
Soon as they saw his beak and claw,
Fled screaming far away."

VIII

The Herald of the Latines
Hath hied him back in state:
The Fathers of the City
Are met in high debate.
Then spake the elder Consul,
An ancient man and wise:
"Now hearken, Conscript Fathers,
To that which I advise.
In seasons of great peril
'T is good that one bear sway;
Then choose we a Dictator,
Whom all men shall obey.

Camerium knows how deeply
  The sword of Aulus bites,
And all our city calls him
  The man of seventy fights.
Then let him be Dictator
  For six months and no more,
And have a Master of the Knights,
  And axes twenty-four."

IX

So Aulus was Dictator,
  The man of seventy fights;
He made Æbutius Elva
  His Master of the Knights.
On the third morn thereafter,
  At dawning of the day,
Did Aulus and Æbutius
  Set forth with their array.
Sempronius Atratinus
  Was left in charge at home
With boys, and with gray-headed men,
  To keep the walls of Rome.
Hard by the Lake Regillus
  Our camp was pitched at night:
Eastward a mile the Latines lay,
  Under the Porcian height.
Far over hill and valley
  Their mighty host was spread;
And with their thousand watch-fires
  The midnight sky was red.

X

Up rose the golden morning
  Over the Porcian height,
The proud Ides of Quintilis
  Marked evermore with white.
Not without secret trouble
  Our bravest saw the foes;

For girt by threescore thousand spears,
  The thirty standards rose.
From every warlike city
  That boasts the Latian name,
Foredoomed to dogs and vultures,
  That gallant army came;
From Setia's purple vineyards,
  From Norba's ancient wall,
From the white streets of Tusculum,
  The proudest town of all;
From where the Witch's Fortress
  O'erhangs the dark-blue seas;
From the still glassy lake that sleeps
  Beneath Aricia's trees —
Those trees in whose dim shadow
  The ghastly priest doth reign,
The priest who slew the slayer,
  And shall himself be slain;
From the drear banks of Ufens,
  Where flights of marsh-fowl play,
And buffaloes lie wallowing
  Through the hot summer's day;
From the gigantic watch-towers,
  No work of earthly men,
Whence Cora's sentinels o'erlook
  The never-ending fen;
From the Laurentian jungle,
  The wild hog's reedy home;
From the green steeps whence Anio leaps
  In floods of snow-white foam.

XI

Aricia, Cora, Norba,
  Velitræ, with the might
Of Setia and of Tusculum,
  Were marshalled on the right:
The leader was Mamilius,
  Prince of the Latian name;

Upon his head a helmet
  Of red gold shone like flame:
High on a gallant charger
  Of dark-gray hue he rode;
Over his gilded armor
  A vest of purple flowed,
Woven in the land of sunrise
  By Syria's dark-browed daughters,
And by the sails of Carthage brought
  Far o'er the southern waters.

XII

Lavinium and Laurentum
  Had on the left their post,
With all the banners of the marsh,
  And banners of the coast.
Their leader was false Sextus,
  That wrought the deed of shame:
With restless pace and haggard face
  To his last field he came.
Men said he saw strange visions
  Which none beside might see;
And that strange sounds were in his ears
  Which none might hear but he.
A woman fair and stately,
  But pale as are the dead,
Oft through the watches of the night
  Sat spinning by his bed.
And as she plied the distaff,
  In a sweet voice and low,
She sang of great old houses,
  And fights fought long ago.
So spun she, and so sang she,
  Until the east was gray.
Then pointed to her bleeding breast,
  And shrieked, and fled away.

XIII

But in the centre thickest
  Were ranged the shields of foes,
And from the centre loudest
  The cry of battle rose.
There Tibur marched and Pedum
  Beneath proud Tarquin's rule,
And Ferentinum of the rock,
  And Gabii of the pool.
There rode the Volscian succors:
  There, in a dark stern ring,
The Roman exiles gathered close
  Around the ancient king.
Though white as Mount Soracte,
  When winter nights are long,
His beard flowed down o'er mail and belt,
  His heart and hand were strong:
Under his hoary eyebrows
  Still flashed forth quenchless rage:
And, if the lance shook in his gripe,
  'T was more with hate than age.
Close at his side was Titus
  On an Apulian steed,
Titus, the youngest Tarquin,
  Too good for such a breed.

XIV

Now on each side the leaders
  Gave signal for the charge;
And on each side the footmen
  Strode on with lance and targe;
And on each side the horsemen
  Struck their spurs deep in gore,
And front to front the armies
  Met with a mighty roar:
And under that great battle
  The earth with blood was red;

And, like the Pomptine fog at morn,
  The dust hung overhead;
And louder still and louder
  Rose from the darkened field
The braying of the war-horns,
  The clang of sword and shield,
The rush of squadrons sweeping
  Like whirlwinds o'er the plain,
The shouting of the slayers,
  And screeching of the slain.

XV

False Sextus rode out foremost,
  His look was high and bold;
His corslet was of bison's hide,
  Plated with steel and gold.
As glares the famished eagle
  From the Digentian rock
On a choice lamb that bounds alone
  Before Bandusia's flock,
Herminius glared on Sextus,
  And came with eagle speed,
Herminius on black Auster,
  Brave champion on brave steed;
In his right hand the broadsword
  That kept the bridge so well,
And on his helm the crown he won
  When proud Fidenæ fell.
Woe to the maid whose lover
  Shall cross his path to-day!
False Sextus saw, and trembled,
  And turned, and fled away.
As turns, as flies, the woodman
  In the Calabrian brake,
When through the reeds gleams the round eye
  Of that fell speckled snake;

So turned, so fled, false Sextus,
And hid him in the rear,
Behind the dark Lavinian ranks,
Bristling with crest and spear.

XVI

But far to north Æbutius,
The Master of the Knights,
Gave Tubero of Norba
To feed the Porcian kites.
Next under those red horse-hoofs
Flaccus of Setia lay;
Better had he been pruning
Among his elms that day.
Mamilius saw the slaughter,
And tossed his golden crest,
And towards the Master of the Knights
Through the thick battle pressed.
Æbutius smote Mamilius
So fiercely on the shield
That the great lord of Tusculum
Well-nigh rolled on the field.
Mamilius smote Æbutius,
With a good aim and true,
Just where the neck and shoulder join,
And pierced him through and through;
And brave Æbutius Elva
Fell swooning to the ground:
But a thick wall of bucklers
Encompassed him around.
His clients from the battle
Bare him some little space,
And filled a helm from the dark lake,
And bathed his brow and face;
And when at last he opened
His swimming eyes to light,

Men say, the earliest words he spake
  Was, "Friends, how goes the fight?"

XVII

But meanwhile in the centre
  Great deeds of arms were wrought;
There Aulus the Dictator
  And there Valerius fought.
Aulus with his good broadsword
  A bloody passage cleared
To where, amidst the thickest foes,
  He saw the long white beard.
Flat lighted that good broadsword
  Upon proud Tarquin's head.
He dropped the lance: he dropped the reins:
  He fell as fall the dead.
Down Aulus springs to slay him,
  With eyes like coals of fire;
But faster Titus hath sprung down,
  And hath bestrode his sire.
Latian captains, Roman knights,
  Fast down to earth they spring,
And hand to hand they fight on foot
  Around the ancient king.
First Titus gave tall Cæso
  A death wound in the face;
Tall Cæso was the bravest man
  Of the brave Fabian race:
Aulus slew Rex of Gabii,
  The priest of Juno's shrine;
Valerius smote down Julius,
  Of Rome's great Julian line;
Julius, who left his mansion,
  High on the Velian hill,
And through all turns of weal and woe
  Followed proud Tarquin still.

Now right across proud Tarquin
  A corpse was Julius laid;
And Titus groaned with rage and grief,
  And at Valerius made.
Valerius struck at Titus,
  And lopped off half his crest;
But Titus stabbed Valerius
  A span deep in the breast.
Like a mast snapped by the tempest,
  Valerius reeled and fell.
Ah! woe is me for the good house
  That loves the people well!
Then shouted loud the Latines;
  And with one rush they bore
The struggling Romans backward
  Three lances' length and more:
And up they took proud Tarquin,
  And laid him on a shield,
And four strong yeomen bare him,
  Still senseless, from the field.

XVIII

But fiercer grew the fighting
  Around Valerius dead;
For Titus dragged him by the foot
  And Aulus by the head.
"On, Latines, on!" quoth Titus,
  "See how the rebels fly!"
"Romans, stand firm!" quoth Aulus,
  "And win this fight or die!
They must not give Valerius
  To raven and to kite;
For aye Valerius loathed the wrong,
  And aye upheld the right:
And for your wives and babies
  In the front rank he fell.
Now play the men for the good house
  That loves the people well!"

XIX

Then tenfold round the body
  The roar of battle rose,
Like the roar of a burning forest,
  When a strong north wind blows,
Now backward, and now forward,
  Rocked furiously the fray,
Till none could see Valerius,
  And none wist where he lay.
For shivered arms and ensigns
  Were heaped there in a mound,
And corpses stiff, and dying men
  That writhed and gnawed the ground;
And wounded horses kicking,
  And snorting purple foam:
Right well did such a couch befit
  A Consular of Rome.

XX

But north looked the Dictator;
  North looked he long and hard,
And spake to Caius Cossus,
  The Captain of his Guard;
"Caius, of all the Romans
  Thou hast the keenest sight,
Say, what through yonder storm of dust
  Comes from the Latian right?"

XXI

Then answered Caius Cossus:
  "I see an evil sight;
The banner of proud Tusculum
  Comes from the Latian right;
I see the pluméd horsemen;
  And far before the rest
I see the dark-gray charger,
  I see the purple vest;

I see the golden helmet
   That shines far off like flame;
So ever rides Mamilius,
   Prince of the Latian name."

XXII

"Now hearken, Caius Cossus:
   Spring on thy horse's back;
Ride as the wolves of Apennine
   Were all upon thy track;
Haste to our southward battle:
   And never draw thy rein
Until thou find Herminius,
   And bid him come amain."

XXIII

So Aulus spake, and turned him
   Again to that fierce strife;
And Caius Cossus mounted,
   And rode for death and life.
Loud clanged beneath his horse-hoofs
   The helmets of the dead,
And many a curdling pool of blood
   Splashed him from heel to head.
So came he far to southward,
   Where fought the Roman host,
Against the banners of the marsh
   And banners of the coast.
Like corn before the sickle
   The stout Lavinians fell,
Beneath the edge of the true sword
   That kept the bridge so well.

XXIV

"Herminius! Aulus greets thee;
   He bids thee come with speed,

To help our central battle,
For sore is there our need;
There wars the youngest Tarquin,
And there the Crest of Flame,
The Tusculan Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name.
Valerius hath fallen fighting
In front of our array;
And Aulus of the seventy fields
Alone upholds the day."

XXV

Herminius beat his bosom:
But never a word he spake.
He clapped his hand on Auster's mane,
He gave the reins a shake.
Away, away, went Auster,
Like an arrow from the bow:
Black Auster was the fleetest steed
From Aufidus to Po.

XXVI

Right glad were all the Romans
Who, in that hour of dread,
Against great odds bare up the war
Around Valerius dead,
When from the south the cheering
Rose with a mighty swell;
"Herminius comes, Herminius,
Who kept the bridge so well!"

XXVII

Mamilius spied Herminius,
And dashed across the way.
"Herminius! I have sought thee
Through many a bloody day.

One of us two, Herminius,
  Shall never more go home.
I will lay on for Tusculum,
  And lay thou on for Rome!"

XXVIII

All round them paused the battle,
  While met in mortal fray
The Roman and the Tusculan,
  The horses black and gray.
Herminius smote Mamilius
  Through breast-plate and through breast,
And fast flowed out the purple blood
  Over the purple vest.
Mamilius smote Herminius
  Through head-piece and through head,
And side by side those chiefs of pride
  Together fell down dead.
Down fell they dead together
  In a great lake of gore;
And still stood all who saw them fall
  While men might count a score.

XXIX

Fast, fast, with heels wild spurning,
  The dark-gray charger fled:
He burst through ranks of fighting men,
  He sprang o'er heaps of dead.
His bridle far out-streaming,
  His flanks all blood and foam,
He sought the southern mountains,
  The mountains of his home.
The pass was steep and rugged,
  The wolves they howled and whined;
But he ran like a whirlwind up the pass,
  And he left the wolves behind.

Through many a startled hamlet
  Thundered his flying feet;
He rushed through the gate of Tusculum,
  He rushed up the long white street;
He rushed by tower and temple,
  And paused not from his race
Till he stood before his master's door
  In the stately market-place.
And straightway round him gathered
  A pale and trembling crowd,
And when they knew him, cries of rage
  Brake forth, and wailing loud:
And women rent their tresses
  For their great prince's fall;
And old men girt on their old swords,
  And went to man the wall.

XXX

But, like a graven image,
  Black Auster kept his place,
And ever wistfully he looked
  Into his master's face.
The raven-mane that daily,
  With pats and fond caresses,
The young Herminia washed and combed,
  And twined in even tresses,
And decked with colored ribbons
  From her own gay attire,
Hung sadly o'er her father's corpse
  In carnage and in mire.
Forth with a shout sprang Titus,
  And seized black Auster's rein.
Then Aulus sware a fearful oath,
  And ran at him amain.
"The furies of thy brother
  With me and mine abide,

If one of your accursed house
  Upon black Auster ride!"
As on an Alpine watch-tower
  From heaven comes down the flame,
Full on the neck of Titus
  The blade of Aulus came:
And out the red blood spouted,
  In a wide arch and tall,
As spouts a fountain in the court
  Of some rich Capuan's hall.
The knees of all the Latines
  Were loosened with dismay,
When dead, on dead Herminius,
  The bravest Tarquin lay.

XXXI

And Aulus the Dictator
  Stroked Auster's raven mane,
With heed he looked unto the girths,
  With heed unto the rein.
"Now bear me well, black Auster,
  Into yon thick array;
And thou and I will have revenge
  For thy good lord this day."

XXXII

So spake he; and was buckling
  Tighter black Auster's band,
When he was aware of a princely pair
  That rode at his right hand.
So like they were, no mortal
  Might one from other know:
White as snow their armor was:
  Their steeds were white as snow.
Never on earthly anvil
  Did such rare armor gleam;

And never did such gallant steeds
Drink of an earthly stream.

XXXIII

And all who saw them trembled,
And pale grew every cheek;
And Aulus the Dictator
Scarce gathered voice to speak.
"Say by what name men call you?
What city is your home?
And wherefore ride ye in such guise
Before the ranks of Rome?"

XXXIV

"By many names men call us;
In many lands we dwell:
Well Samothracia knows us;
Cyrene knows us well.
Our house in gay Tarentum
Is hung each morn with flowers:
High o'er the masts of Syracuse
Our marble portal towers;
But by the proud Eurotas
Is our dear native home;
And for the right we come to fight
Before the ranks of Rome."

XXXV

So answered those strange horsemen,
And each couched low his spear;
And forthwith all the ranks of Rome
Were bold, and of good cheer:
And on the thirty armies
Came wonder and affright,
And Ardea wavered on the left,
And Cora on the right.
"Rome to the charge!" cried Aulus;
"The foe begins to yield!

Charge for the hearth of Vesta!
  Charge for the Golden Shield!
Let no man stop to plunder,
  But slay, and slay, and slay;
The gods who live forever
  Are on our side to-day."

XXXVI

Then the fierce trumpet-flourish
  From earth to heaven arose,
The kites know well the long stern swell
  That bids the Romans close.
Then the good sword of Aulus
  Was lifted up to slay;
Then, like a crag down Apennine,
  Rushed Auster through the fray.
But under those strange horsemen
  Still thicker lay the slain;
And after those strange horses
  Black Auster toiled in vain.
Behind them Rome's long battle
  Came rolling on the foe,
Ensigns dancing wild above,
  Blades all in line below.
So comes the Po in flood-time
  Upon the Celtic plain;
So comes the squall, blacker than night,
  Upon the Adrian main.
Now, by our Sire Quirinus,
  It was a goodly sight
To see the thirty standards
  Swept down the tide of flight.
So flies the spray of Adria
  When the black squall doth blow
So corn-sheaves in the flood-time
  Spin down the whirling Po.
False Sextus to the mountains
  Turned first his horse's head;

And fast fled Ferentinum,
  And fast Lanuvium fled.
The horsemen of Nomentum
  Spurred hard out of the fray;
The footmen of Velitræ
  Threw shield and spear away.
And underfoot was trampled,
  Amidst the mud and gore,
The banner of proud Tusculum,
  That never stooped before:
And down went Flavius Faustus,
  Who led his stately ranks
From where the apple blossoms wave
  On Anio's echoing banks,
And Tullus of Arpinum,
  Chief of the Volscian aids,
And Metius with the long fair curls,
  The love of Anxur's maids,
And the white head of Vulso,
  The great Arician seer,
And Nepos of Laurentum,
  The hunter of the deer;
And in the back false Sextus
  Felt the good Roman steel,
And wriggling in the dust he died,
  Like a worm beneath the wheel:
And fliers and pursuers
  Were mingled in a mass;
And far away the battle
  Went roaring through the pass.

XXXVII

Sempronius Atratinus
  Sat in the Eastern Gate,
Beside him were three Fathers,
  Each in his chair of state;
Fabius, whose nine stout grandsons
  That day were in the field,

And Manlius, eldest of the Twelve
  Who keep the Golden Shield;
And Sergius, the High Pontiff,
  For wisdom far renowned;
In all Etruria's colleges
  Was no such Pontiff found.
And all around the portal,
  And high above the wall,
Stood a great throng of people,
  But sad and silent all;
Young lads and stooping elders
  That might not bear the mail,
Matrons with lips that quivered,
  And maids with faces pale.
Since the first gleam of daylight,
  Sempronius had not ceased
To listen for the rushing
  Of horse-hoofs from the east.
The mist of eve was rising,
  The sun was hastening down,
When he was aware of a princely pair
  Fast pricking towards the town.
So like they were, man never
  Saw twins so like before;
Red with gore their armor was,
  Their steeds were red with gore.

XXXVIII

"Hail to the great Asylum!
  Hail to the hill-tops seven!
Hail to the fire that burns for aye,
  And the shield that fell from heaven!
This day, by Lake Regillus,
  Under the Porcian height,
All in the lands of Tusculum
  Was fought a glorious fight.

To-morrow your Dictator
  Shall bring in triumph home
The spoils of thirty cities
  To deck the shrines of Rome!"

XXXIX

Then burst from that great concourse
  A shout that shook the towers,
And some ran north, and some ran south,
  Crying, "The day is ours!"
But on rode these strange horsemen,
  With slow and lordly pace;
And none who saw their bearing
  Durst ask their name or race.
On rode they to the Forum,
  While laurel-boughs and flowers,
From house-tops and from windows,
  Fell on their crests in showers.
When they drew nigh to Vesta,
  They vaulted down amain,
And washed their horses in the well
  That springs by Vesta's fane.
And straight again they mounted,
  And rode to Vesta's door;
Then, like a blast, away they passed,
  And no man saw them more.

XL

And all the people trembled,
  And pale grew every cheek;
And Sergius the High Pontiff
  Alone found voice to speak:
"The gods who live forever
  Have fought for Rome to-day!
These be the Great Twin Brethren
  To whom the Dorians pray.

Back comes the Chief in triumph,
  Who, in the hour of fight,
Hath seen the Great Twin Brethren
  In harness on his right.
Safe comes the ship to haven,
  Through billows and through gales,
If once the Great Twin Brethren
  Sit shining on the sails.
Wnerefore they washed their horses
  In Vesta's holy well,
Wherefore they rode to Vesta's door,
  I know, but may not tell.
Here, hard by Vesta's temple,
  Build we a stately dome
Unto the Great Twin Brethren
  Who fought so well for Rome.
And when the months returning
  Bring back this day of fight,
The proud Ides of Quintilis,
  Marked evermore with white,
Unto the Great Twin Brethren
  Let all the people throng,
With chaplets and with offerings,
  With music and with song;
And let the doors and windows
  Be hung with garlands all,
And let the knights be summoned
  To Mars without the wall:
Thence let them ride in purple
  With joyous trumpet-sound,
Each mounted on his war-horse,
  And each with olive crowned;
And pass in solemn order
  Before the sacred dome,
Where dwell the Great Twin Brethren
  Who fought so well for Rome."

VIRGINIA

A COLLECTION consisting exclusively of war-songs would give an imperfect, or rather an erroneous, notion of the spirit of the old Latin ballads. The Patricians, during more than a century after the expulsion of the Kings, held all the high military commands. A Plebeian, even though, like Lucius Siccius, he were distinguished by his valor and knowledge of war, could serve only in subordinate posts. A minstrel, therefore, who wished to celebrate the early triumphs of his country, could hardly take any but Patricians for his heroes. The warriors who are mentioned in the two preceding lays, Horatius, Lartius, Herminius, Aulus Posthumius, Æbutius Elva, Sempronius Atratinus, Valerius Poplicola, were all members of the dominant order; and a poet who was singing their praises, whatever his own political opinions might be, would naturally abstain from insulting the class to which they belonged, and from reflecting on the system which had placed such men at the head of the legions of the Commonwealth.

But there was a class of compositions in which the great families were by no means so courteously treated. No parts of early Roman history are richer with poetical coloring than those which relate to the long contest between the privileged houses and the commonalty. The population of Rome was, from a very early period, divided into hereditary castes, which, indeed, readily united to repel foreign enemies, but which regarded each other, during many years, with bitter animosity. Between those castes there was a barrier hardly less strong than that which, at Venice, parted the members of the Great Council from their countrymen. In some respects, indeed, the line which separated an Icilius or a Duilius from a Posthumius or a Fabius was even more deeply marked than that which separated the rower of a gondola from a Contarini or a Morosini. At Venice the distinction was merely civil. At Rome it was both civil and religious. Among the grievances under which the Plebeians suffered, three were felt as peculiarly severe. They were excluded from the highest magistracies; they were excluded from all share in the public lands; and they were ground down to the dust by partial and barbarous legislation touching pecuniary contracts. The ruling class in Rome was a moneyed class; and it made and administered the laws with a view solely to its own interest. Thus the relation between lender and borrower was mixed up with the relation between sovereign and subject. The great men held a large portion of the community in dependence by means of advances at enormous usury. The law of debt, framed by creditors, and for the protection of creditors, was the most horrible that has ever been known among men. The liberty and even the life of the insolvent were at the mercy of the Patrician money-lenders. Children often became slaves in consequence of the misfortunes of their parents. The debtor was imprisoned, not in a public jail under the care of impartial public functionaries, but in a private workhouse belonging to the creditor. Frightful stories were told respecting these dungeons. It was said that torture and brutal violation were common; that tight stocks, heavy chains, scanty measures of food, were used to punish wretches guilty of nothing but poverty; and that brave soldiers, whose breasts were covered with honorable scars, were often marked still more deeply on the back by the scourges of high-born usurers.

The Plebeians were, however, not wholly without constitutional rights. From an early period they had been admitted to some share of political power. They were enrolled each in his century, and were allowed a share.

considerable though not proportioned to their numerical strength, in the disposal of those high dignities from which they were themselves excluded. Thus their position bore some resemblance to that of the Irish Catholics during the interval between the year 1792 and the year 1829. The Plebeians had also the privilege of annually appointing officers, named Tribunes, who had no active share in the government of the commonwealth, but who, by degrees, acquired a power formidable even to the ablest and most resolute Consuls and Dictators. The person of the Tribune was inviolable; and, though he could directly effect little, he could obstruct everything.

During more than a century after the institution of the Tribuneship, the Commons struggled manfully for the removal of the grievances under which they labored; and, in spite of many checks and reverses, succeeded in wringing concession after concession from the stubborn aristocracy. At length in the year of the city 378, both parties mustered their whole strength for their last and most desperate conflict. The popular and active Tribune, Caius Licinius, proposed the three memorable laws which are called by his name, and which were intended to redress the three great evils of which the Plebeians complained. He was supported, with eminent ability and firmness, by his colleague, Lucius Sextius. The struggle appears to have been the fiercest that ever in any community terminated without an appeal to arms. If such a contest had raged in any Greek city, the streets would have run with blood. But, even in the paroxysms of faction, the Roman retained his gravity, his respect for law, and his tenderness for the lives of his fellow citizens. Year after year Licinius and Sextius were reëlected Tribunes. Year after year, if the narrative which has come down to us is to be trusted, they continued to exert, to the full extent, their power of stopping the whole machine of government. No curule magistrates could be chosen; no military muster could be held. We know too little of the state of

Rome in those days to be able to conjecture how, during that long anarchy, the peace was kept, and ordinary justice administered between man and man. The animosity of both parties rose to the greatest height. The excitement, we may well suppose, would have been peculiarly intense at the annual election of Tribunes. On such occasions there can be little doubt that the great families did all that could be done, by threats and caresses, to break the union of the Plebeians. That union, however, proved indissoluble. At length the good cause triumphed. The Licinian laws were carried. Lucius Sextius was the first Plebeian Consul, Caius Licinius the third.

The results of this great change were singularly happy and glorious. Two centuries of prosperity, harmony, and victory followed the reconciliation of the orders. Men who remembered Rome engaged in waging petty wars almost within sight of the Capitol lived to see her the mistress of Italy. While the disabilities of the Plebeians continued, she was scarcely able to maintain her ground against the Volscians and Hernicans. When those disabilities were removed, she rapidly became more than a match for Carthage and Macedon.

During the great Licinian contest the Plebeian poets were, doubtless, not silent. Even in modern times songs have been by no means without influence on public affairs; and we may therefore infer that, in a society where printing was unknown and where books were rare, a pathetic or humorous party-ballad must have produced effects such as we can but faintly conceive. It is certain that satirical poems were common at Rome from a very early period. The rustics, who lived at a distance from the seat of government, and took little part in the strife of factions, gave vent to their petty local animosities in coarse Fescennine verse. The lampoons of the city were doubtless of a higher order; and their sting was early felt by the nobility. For in the Twelve Tables, long before the time of the Licinian laws, a severe punishment was denounced against the citizen who should compose or recite verses reflecting on another.[1] Satire is, indeed, the only sort of composition in which the Latin poets, whose works have come down to us, were not mere imitators of foreign models; and it is therefore the only sort of composition in which they have never been rivalled. It was not, like their tragedy, their comedy, their epic and lyric poetry, a hothouse plant which, in return for assiduous and skilful culture, gave only scanty and sickly fruits. It was hardy and full of sap; and in all the various juices which it yielded might be distinguished the flavor of the Ausonian soil. "Satire," said Quinctilian, with just pride, "is all our own." Satire sprang, in truth, naturally from the constitution of the Roman government and from the spirit of the Roman people; and, though at length subjected to metrical rules derived from Greece, retained to the last an essentially Roman character. Lucilius was the earliest satirist whose works were held in esteem under the Cæsars. But many years before Lucilius was born, Nævius had been flung into a dungeon, and guarded there with circumstances of unusual rigor, on account of the bitter lines in which he had attacked the great Cæcilian family.[2] The genius and spirit of the Roman satirists survived the liberty of their country, and were not extinguished by the cruel despotism of the Julian and Flavian Emperors. The great poet who told the story of Domitian's turbot was the legitimate successor of those forgotten minstrels whose songs animated the factions of the infant Republic.

Those minstrels, as Niebuhr has remarked, appear to have generally taken the popular side. We can hardly be mistaken in supposing that, at the great crisis of the civil conflict, they employed themselves in versifying all the most powerful and virulent speeches of the Tribunes, and in heaping abuse on the leaders of the aristocracy. Every personal defect, every domestic scandal, every tradition dishonorable to a noble house, would be sought out, brought into notice, and exaggerated. The illustrious head of the aristocratical party, Marcus Furius Camillus, might perhaps be, in some measure, protected by his venerable age and by the memory of his great services to the state. But Appius Claudius Crassus enjoyed no such immunity. He was descended from a long line of ancestors distinguished by their haughty demeanor, and by the inflexibility with which they had withstood all the demands of the Plebeian order. While the political conduct and the deportment of the Claudian nobles drew upon them the fiercest public hatred, they were accused of wanting, if any credit is due to the early history of Rome, a class of qualities which, in a military commonwealth, is sufficient to cover a multitude of offences. The chiefs of the family appear to have been eloquent, versed in civil business, and learned after the fashion of their age; but in war they were not distinguished by skill or valor. Some of them, as if conscious where their weakness lay, had, when filling the highest magistracies, taken internal administration as their department of public business, and left the military command to their colleagues.[1] One of them had been entrusted with an army, and had failed ignominiously.[2] None of them had been honored with a triumph. None of them had achieved any martial exploit, such as those by which Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus, Titus Quinctius Capitolinus, Aulus Cornelius Cossus, and, above all, the great Camillus, had extorted the reluctant esteem of the multitude. During the Licinian conflict, Appius Claudius Crassus signalized himself by the ability and severity with which he harangued against the two great agitators. He would naturally, therefore, be the favorite mark of the Plebeian satirists; nor would they have been at a loss to find a point on which he was open to attack.

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[1] Cicero justly infers from this law that there had been early Latin poets whose works had been lost before his time. "Quamquam id quidem etiam xii tabulæ declarant, condi jam tum solitum esse carmen, quod ne licere, fieri ad alterius injuriam lege sanxerunt." — Tusc. iv. 2.

[2] Plautus, Miles Gloriosus. Aulus Gellius, iii. 3.

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[1] In the years of the city 260, 304, and 330.

[2] In the year of the city 282.

His grandfather, called, like himself, Appius Claudius, had left a name as much detested as that of Sextus Tarquinius. This elder Appius had been Consul more than seventy years before the introduction of the Licinian laws. By availing himself of a singular crisis in public feeling, he had obtained the consent of the Commons to the abolition of the Tribuneship, and had been the chief of that Council of Ten to which the whole direction of the state had been committed. In a few months his administration had become universally odious. It had been swept away by an irresistible outbreak of popular fury; and its memory was still held in abhorrence by the whole city. The immediate cause of the downfall of this execrable government was said to have been an attempt made by Appius Claudius upon the chastity of a beautiful young girl of humble birth. The story ran that the Decemvir, unable to succeed by bribes and solicitations, resorted to an outrageous act of tyranny. A vile dependent of the Claudian house laid claim to the damsel as his slave. The cause was brought before the tribunal of Appius. The wicked magistrate, in defiance of the clearest proofs, gave judgment for the claimant. But the girl's father, a brave soldier, saved her from servitude and dishonor by stabbing her to the heart in the sight of the whole Forum. That blow was the signal for a general explosion. Camp and city rose at once; the Ten were pulled down; the Tribuneship was reëstablished; and Appius escaped the hands of the executioner only by voluntary death.

It can hardly be doubted that a story so admirably adapted to the purposes both of the poet and of the demagogue would be eagerly seized upon by minstrels burning with hatred against the Patrician order, against the Claudian house, and especially against the grandson and namesake of the infamous Decemvir.

In order that the reader may judge fairly of these fragments of the lay of Virginia, he must imagine himself a Plebeian who has just voted for the reëlection of Sextius and Licinius. All the power of the Patricians has been exerted to throw out the two great champions of the Commons. Every Posthumius, Æmilius, and Cornelius has used his influence to the utmost. Debtors have been let out of the workhouses on condition of voting against the men of the people; clients have been posted to hiss and interrupt the favorite candidates; Appius Claudius Crassus has spoken with more than his usual eloquence and asperity: all has been in vain, Licinius and Sextius have a fifth time carried all the tribes: work is suspended; the booths are closed; the Plebeians bear on their shoulders the two champions of liberty through the Forum. Just at this moment it is announced that a popular poet, a zealous adherent of the Tribunes, has made a new song which will cut the Claudian nobles to the heart. The crowd gathers round him, and calls on him to recite it. He takes his stand on the spot where, according to tradition, Virginia, more than seventy years ago, was seized by the pandar of Appius, and he begins his story.

VIRGINIA

FRAGMENTS OF A LAY SUNG IN THE FORUM ON THE DAY WHEREON LUCIUS SEXTIUS SEXTINUS LATERANUS AND CAIUS LICINIUS CALVUS STOLO WERE ELECTED TRIBUNES OF THE COMMONS THE FIFTH TIME, IN THE YEAR OF THE CITY CCCLXXXII

Ye good men of the Commons, with loving hearts and true,
Who stand by the bold Tribunes that still have stood by you,
Come, make a circle round me, and mark my tale with care,
A tale of what Rome once hath borne, of what Rome yet may bear.
This is no Grecian fable, of fountains running wine,
Of maids with snaky tresses, or sailors turned to swine.
Here, in this very Forum, under the noonday sun,
In sight of all the people, the bloody deed was done.
Old men still creep among us who saw that fearful day,
Just seventy years and seven ago, when the wicked Ten bare sway.

Of all the wicked Ten still the names are held accursed,
And of all the wicked Ten Appius Claudius was the worst.
He stalked along the Forum like King Tarquin in his pride:
Twelve axes waited on him, six marching on a side;
The townsmen shrank to right and left, and eyed askance with fear
His lowering brow, his curling mouth which always seemed to sneer;

That brow of hate, that mouth of scorn, marks all the kindred still;
For never was there Claudius yet but wished the Commons ill:
Nor lacks he fit attendance; for close behind his heels,
With outstretched chin and crouching pace, the client Marcus steals,
His loins girt up to run with speed, be the errand what it may,
And the smile flickering on his cheek, for aught his lord may say.
Such varlets pimp and jest for hire among the lying Greeks:
Such varlets still are paid to hoot when brave Licinius speaks.
Where'er ye shed the honey, the buzzing flies will crowd;
Where'er ye fling the carrion, the raven's croak is loud;
Where'er down Tiber garbage floats, the greedy pike ye see;
And wheresoe'er such lord is found, such client still will be.

Just then, as through one cloudless chink in a black stormy sky
Shines out the dewy morning-star, a fair young girl came by.
With her small tablets in her hand, and her satchel on her arm,
Home she went bounding from the school, nor dreamed of shame or harm;
And past those dreaded axes she innocently ran,
With bright, frank brow that had not learned to blush at gaze of man;
And up the Sacred Street she turned, and, as she danced along,
She warbled gayly to herself lines of the good old song,
How for a sport the princes came spurring from the camp,

And found Lucrece, combing the fleece, under the midnight lamp.
The maiden sang as sings the lark, when up he darts his flight,
From his nest in the green April corn, to meet the morning light;
And Appius heard her sweet young voice, and saw her sweet young face,
And loved her with the accursed love of his accursed race,
And all along the Forum, and up the Sacred Street,
His vulture eye pursued the trip of those small glancing feet.

. . . .

Over the Alban mountains the light of morning broke;
From all the roofs of the Seven Hills curled the thin wreaths of smoke:
The city-gates were opened; the Forum all alive
With buyers and with sellers was humming like a hive:
Blithely on brass and timber the craftsman's stroke was ringing,
And blithely o'er her panniers the market-girl was singing,
And blithely young Virginia came smiling from her home:
Ah! woe for young Virginia, the sweetest maid in Rome!
With her small tablets in her hand, and her satchel on her arm,
Forth she went bounding to the school, nor dreamed of shame or harm.
She crossed the Forum shining with stalls in alleys gay,
And just had reached the very spot whereon I stand this day,
When up the varlet Marcus came; not such as when erewhile
He crouched behind his patron's heels with the true client smile:

He came with lowering forehead, swollen features, and clenched fist,
And strode across Virginia's path, and caught her by the wrist.
Hard strove the frightened maiden, and screamed with look aghast;
And at her scream from right and left the folk came running fast;
The money-changer Crispus, with his thin silver hairs,
And Hanno from the stately booth glittering with Punic wares,
And the strong smith Muræna, grasping a half-forged brand,
And Volero the flesher, his cleaver in his hand.
All came in wrath and wonder, for all knew that fair child;
And, as she passed them twice a day, all kissed their hands and smiled;
And the strong smith Muræna gave Marcus such a blow,
The caitiff reeled three paces back, and let the maiden go.
Yet glared he fiercely round him, and growled in harsh, fell tone,
"She 's mine, and I will have her, I seek but for mine own:
She is my slave, born in my house, and stolen away and sold,
The year of the sore sickness, ere she was twelve hours old.
'T was in the sad September, the month of wail and fright,
Two augurs were borne forth that morn; the Consul died ere night.
I wait on Appius Claudius, I waited on his sire:
Let him who works the client wrong beware the patron's ire!"

So spake the varlet Marcus; and dread and silence came

On all the people at the sound of the great Claudian name.
For then there was no Tribune to speak the word of might,
Which makes the rich man tremble, and guards the poor man's right.
There was no brave Licinius, no honest Sextius then;
But all the city, in great fear, obeyed the wicked Ten.
Yet ere the varlet Marcus again might seize the maid,
Who clung tight to Muræna's skirt, and sobbed, and shrieked for aid,
Forth through the throng of gazers the young Icilius pressed,
And stamped his foot, and rent his gown, and smote upon his breast,
And sprang upon that column, by many a minstrel sung,
Whereon three mouldering helmets, three rusting swords, are hung,
And beckoned to the people, and in bold voice and clear
Poured thick and fast the burning words which tyrants quake to hear.

"Now, by your children's cradles, now by your fathers' graves,
Be men to-day, Quirites, or be forever slaves!
For this did Servius give us laws? For this did Lucrece bleed?
For this was the great vengeance wrought on Tarquin's evil seed?
For this did those false sons make red the axes of their sire?
For this did Scævola's right hand hiss in the Tuscan fire?
Shall the vile fox-earth awe the race that stormed the lion's den?
Shall we, who could not brook one lord, crouch to the wicked Ten?

Oh, for that ancient spirit which curbed the Senate's will!
Oh, for the tents which in old time whitened the Sacred
Hill!
In those brave days our fathers stood firmly side by side;
They faced the Marcian fury; they tamed the Fabian
pride:
They drove the fiercest Quinctius an outcast forth from
Rome;
They sent the haughtiest Claudius with shivered fasces
home.
But what their care bequeathed us our madness flung
away:
All the ripe fruit of threescore years was blighted in a
day.
Exult, ye proud Patricians! The hard-fought fight is
o'er.
We strove for honors — 't was in vain; for freedom —
't is no more.
No crier to the polling summons the eager throng;
No Tribune breathes the word of might that guards the
weak from wrong.
Our very hearts, that were so high, sink down beneath
your will.
Riches, and lands, and power, and state — ye have them:
— keep them still.
Still keep the holy fillets; still keep the purple gown,
The axes, and the curule chair, the car, and laurel crown:
Still press us for your cohorts, and, when the fight is
done,
Still fill your garners from the soil which our good swords
have won.
Still, like a spreading ulcer, which leech-craft may not
cure,
Let your foul usance eat away the substance of the poor.
Still let your haggard debtors bear all their fathers bore;
Still let your dens of torment be noisome as of yore;
No fire when Tiber freezes; no air in dog-star heat;

And store of rods for free-born backs, and holes for free-born feet.
Heap heavier still the fetters; bar closer still the grate;
Patient as sheep we yield us up unto your cruel hate.
But, by the Shades beneath us, and by the gods above,
Add not unto your cruel hate your yet more cruel love!
Have ye not graceful ladies, whose spotless lineage springs
From Consuls, and High Pontiffs, and ancient Alban kings?
Ladies, who deign not on our paths to set their tender feet,
Who from their cars look down with scorn upon the wondering street,
Who in Corinthian mirrors their own proud smiles behold,
And breathe of Capuan odors, and shine with Spanish gold?
Then leave the poor Plebeian his single tie to life —
The sweet, sweet love of daughter, of sister, and of wife,
The gentle speech, the balm for all that his vexed soul endures,
The kiss, in which he half forgets even such a yoke as yours.
Still let the maiden's beauty swell the father's breast with pride;
Still let the bridegroom's arms infold an unpolluted bride.
Spare us the inexpiable wrong, the unutterable shame,
That turns the coward's heart to steel, the sluggard's blood to flame,
Lest, when our latest hope is fled, ye taste of our despair,
And learn by proof, in some wild hour, how much the wretched dare."

. . . .
. . . .

Straightway Virginius led the maid a little space aside,
To where the reeking shambles stood, piled up with horn and hide,

Close to yon low dark archway, where, in a crimson flood,
Leaps down to the great sewer the gurgling stream of blood.
Hard by, a flesher on a block had laid his whittle down:
Virginius caught the whittle up, and hid it in his gown.
And then his eyes grew very dim, and his throat began to swell,
And in a hoarse, changed voice he spake, "Farewell, sweet child! Farewell!
Oh! how I loved my darling! Though stern I sometimes be,
To thee, thou know'st, I was not so. Who could be so to thee?
And how my darling loved me! How glad she was to hear
My footstep on the threshold when I came back last year!
And how she danced with pleasure to see my civic crown,
And took my sword, and hung it up, and brought me forth my gown!
Now, all those things are over — yes, all thy pretty ways,
Thy needlework, thy prattle, thy snatches of old lays;
And none will grieve when I go forth, or smile when I return,
Or watch beside the old man's bed, or weep upon his urn.
The house that was the happiest within the Roman walls,
The house that envied not the wealth of Capua's marble halls,
Now, for the brightness of thy smile, must have eternal gloom,
And for the music of thy voice, the silence of the tomb.
The time is come. See how he points his eager hand this way!
See how his eyes gloat on thy grief, like a kite's upon the prey!
With all his wit, he little deems, that, spurned, betrayed, bereft,

Thy father hath in his despair one fearful refuge left.
He little deems that in this hand I clutch what still can save
Thy gentle youth from taunts and blows, the portion of the slave;
Yea, and from nameless evil, that passeth taunt and blow —
Foul outrage which thou knowest not, which thou shalt never know.
Then clasp me round the neck once more, and give me one more kiss;
And now mine own dear little girl, there is no way but this."
With that he lifted high the steel, and smote her in the side,
And in her blood she sank to earth, and with one sob she died.

Then, for a little moment, all people held their breath;
And through the crowded Forum was stillness as of death;
And in another moment brake forth from one and all
A cry as if the Volscians were coming o'er the wall.
Some with averted faces shrieking fled home amain;
Some ran to call a leech; and some ran to lift the slain;
Some felt her lips and little wrist, if life might there be found;
And some tore up their garments fast, and strove to stanch the wound.
In vain they ran, and felt, and stanched; for never truer blow
That good right arm had dealt in fight against a Volscian foe.

When Appius Claudius saw that deed, he shuddered and sank down,
And hid his face some little space with the corner of his gown,

Till, with white lips and bloodshot eyes, Virginius tottered nigh,
And stood before the judgment-seat, and held the knife on high.
"Oh! dwellers in the nether gloom, avengers of the slain,
By this dear blood I cry to you, do right between us twain;
And even as Appius Claudius hath dealt by me and mine,
Deal you by Appius Claudius and all the Claudian line!"
So spake the slayer of his child, and turned, and went his way;
But first he cast one haggard glance to where the body lay,
And writhed, and groaned a fearful groan, and then, with steadfast feet,
Strode right across the market-place unto the Sacred Street.

Then up sprang Appius Claudius: "Stop him; alive or dead!
Ten thousand pounds of copper to the man who brings his head."
He looked upon his clients; but none would work his will.
He looked upon his lictors; but they trembled, and stood still.
And, as Virginius through the press his way in silence cleft,
Ever the mighty multitude fell back to right and left.
And he hath passed in safety unto his woeful home,
And there ta'en horse to tell the camp what deeds are done in Rome.

By this the flood of people was swollen from every side,
And streets and porches round were filled with that o'erflowing tide;

And close around the body gathered a little train
Of them that were the nearest and dearest to the slain.
They brought a bier, and hung it with many a cypress crown,
And gently they uplifted her, and gently laid her down.
The face of Appius Claudius wore the Claudian scowl and sneer,
And in the Claudian note he cried, "What doth this rabble here?
Have they no crafts to mind at home, that hitherward they stray?
Ho! lictors, clear the market-place, and fetch the corpse away!"
The voice of grief and fury till then had not been loud;
But a deep sullen murmur wandered among the crowd,
Like the moaning noise that goes before the whirlwind on the deep,
Or the growl of a fierce watch-dog but half aroused from sleep.
But when the lictors at that word, tall yeomen all and strong,
Each with his axe and sheaf of twigs, went down into the throng,
Those old men say, who saw that day of sorrow and of sin,
That in the Roman Forum was never such a din.
The wailing, hooting, cursing, the howls of grief and hate,
Were heard beyond the Pincian Hill, beyond the Latin Gate.
But close around the body, where stood the little train
Of them that were the nearest and dearest to the slain,
No cries were there, but teeth set fast, low whispers and black frowns,
And breaking up of benches, and girding up of gowns.
'Twas well the lictors might not pierce to where the maiden lay,

Else surely had they been all twelve torn limb from limb that day.
Right glad they were to struggle back, blood streaming from their heads,
With axes all in splinters, and raiment all in shreds.
Then Appius Claudius gnawed his lip, and the blood left his cheek,
And thrice he beckoned with his hand, and thrice he strove to speak;
And thrice the tossing Forum set up a frightful yell:
"See, see, thou dog! what thou hast done; and hide thy shame in hell!
Thou that wouldst make our maidens slaves must first make slaves of men.
Tribunes! Hurrah for Tribunes! Down with the wicked Ten!"
And straightway, thick as hailstones, came whizzing through the air,
Pebbles, and bricks, and potsherds, all round the curule chair:
And upon Appius Claudius great fear and trembling came,
For never was a Claudius yet brave against aught but shame.
Though the great houses love us not, we own, to do them right,
That the great houses, all save one, have borne them well in fight.
Still Caius of Corioli, his triumphs and his wrongs,
His vengeance and his mercy, live in our camp-fire songs.
Beneath the yoke of Furius oft have Gaul and Tuscan bowed;
And Rome may bear the pride of him of whom herself is proud.
But evermore a Claudius shrinks from a stricken field,
And changes color like a maid at sight of sword and shield.

The Claudian triumphs all were won within the city towers;
The Claudian yoke was never pressed on any necks but ours.
A Cossus, like a wild cat, springs ever at the face;
A Fabius rushes like a boar against the shouting chase;
But the vile Claudian litter, raging with currish spite,
Still yelps and snaps at those who run, still runs from those who smite.
So now 't was seen of Appius. When stones began to fly,
He shook, and crouched, and wrung his hands, and smote upon his thigh.
"Kind clients, honest lictors, stand by me in this fray!
Must I be torn in pieces? Home, home, the nearest way!"
While yet he spake, and looked around with a bewildered stare,
Four sturdy lictors put their necks beneath the curule chair;
And fourscore clients on the left, and fourscore on the right,
Arrayed themselves with swords and staves, and loins girt up for fight.
But, though without or staff or sword, so furious was the throng,
That scarce the train with might and main could bring their lord along.
Twelve times the crowd made at him; five times they seized his gown;
Small chance was his to rise again, if once they got him down:
And sharper came the pelting; and evermore the yell, —
"Tribunes! we will have Tribunes!" — rose with a louder swell:
And the chair tossed as tosses a bark with tattered sail
When raves the Adriatic beneath an eastern gale,

When the Calabrian sea-marks are lost in clouds of spume,
And the great Thunder-Cape has donned his veil of inky gloom.
One stone hit Appius in the mouth, and one beneath the ear;
And ere he reached Mount Palatine, he swooned with pain and fear.
His cursed head, that he was wont to hold so high with pride,
Now, like a drunken man's, hung down, and swayed from side to side;
And when his stout retainers had brought him to his door,
His face and neck were all one cake of filth and clotted gore.
As Appius Claudius was that day, so may his grandson be!
God send Rome one such other sight, and send me there to see!

. . . .

THE PROPHECY OF CAPYS

It can hardly be necessary to remind any reader that according to the popular tradition, Romulus, after he had slain his granduncle Amulius, and restored his grandfather Numitor, determined to quit Alba, the hereditary domain of the Sylvian princes, and to found a new city. The gods, it was added, vouchsafed the clearest signs of the favor with which they regarded the enterprise, and of the high destinies reserved for the young colony.

This event was likely to be a favorite theme of the old Latin minstrels. They would naturally attribute the project of Romulus to some divine intimation of the power and prosperity which it was decreed that his city should attain. They would probably introduce seers foretelling the victories of unborn Consuls and Dictators, and the last great victory would generally occupy the most conspicuous place in the prediction. There is nothing strange in the supposition that the poet who was employed to celebrate the first great triumph of the Romans over the Greeks might throw his song of exultation into this form.

The occasion was one likely to excite the strongest feelings of national pride. A great outrage had been followed by a great retribution. Seven years before this time, Lucius Posthumius Megellus, who sprang from one of the noblest houses of Rome, and had been thrice Consul, was sent ambassador to Tarentum, with charge to demand reparation for grievous injuries. The Tarentines gave him audience in their theatre, where he addressed them in such Greek as he could command, which, we may well believe, was not exactly such as Cineas would have spoken. An exquisite sense of the ridiculous belonged to the Greek character; and closely connected with this faculty was a strong propensity to flippancy and impertinence. When Posthumius placed an accent wrong, his hearers burst into a laugh. When he remonstrated, they hooted him, and called him barbarian; and at length hissed him off the stage as if he had been a bad actor. As the grave Roman retired, a buffoon, who, from his constant drunkenness, was nicknamed the Pint-pot, came up with gestures of the grossest indecency, and bespattered the senatorial gown with filth. Posthumius turned round to the multitude, and held up the gown, as if appealing to the universal law of nations. The sight only increased the insolence of the Tarentines. They clapped their hands, and set up a shout of laughter which shook the theatre. "Men of Tarentum," said Posthumius, "it will take not a little blood to wash this gown."[1]

Rome, in consequence of this insult, declared war against the Tarentines. The Tarentines sought for allies beyond the Ionian Sea. Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, came to their help with a large army; and, for the first time, the two great nations of antiquity were fairly matched against each other.

The fame of Greece in arms, as well as in arts, was then at the height. Half a century earlier, the career of Alexander had excited the admiration and terror of all nations from the Ganges to the Pillars of Hercules. Royal houses, founded by Macedonian captains, still reigned at Antioch and Alexandria. That barbarian warriors, led by barbarian chiefs, should win a pitched battle against Greek valor guided by Greek science, seemed as incredible as it would now seem that the Burmese or the Siamese should, in the open plain, put to flight an equal number of the best English troops. The Tarentines were convinced that their countrymen were irresistible in war; and this conviction had emboldened them to treat with the grossest indignity one whom they regarded as the representative of an inferior race. Of the Greek generals then living Pyrrhus was indisputably the first. Among the troops who were trained in the Greek discipline his Epirotes ranked high. His expedition to Italy was a turning-point in the history of the world. He found there a people who, far inferior to the Athenians and Corinthians in the fine arts, in the speculative sciences, and in all the refinements of life, were the best soldiers on the face of the earth. Their arms, their gradations of rank, their order of battle, their method of intrenchment, were all of Latin origin, and had all been gradually brought near to perfection, not by the study of foreign models, but by the genius and experience of many generations of great native commanders. The first words which broke from the king, when his practised eye had surveyed the Roman encampment, were full of meaning: "These barbarians," he said, "have nothing barbarous in their military arrangements." He was at first victorious; for his own talents were superior to those of the captains who were opposed to him; and the Romans were not prepared for the onset of the elephants of the East, which were then for the first time seen in Italy — moving mountains, with long snakes for hands.[1] But the victories of the Epirotes were fiercely disputed, dearly purchased, and altogether unprofitable. At length, Manius Curius Dentatus, who had in his first Consulship won two triumphs, was again placed at the head of the Roman Commonwealth, and sent to encounter the invaders. A great battle was fought near Beneventum. Pyrrhus was completely defeated. He repassed the sea; and the world learned, with amazement, that a people had been discovered who, in fair fighting, were superior to the best troops that had been drilled on the system of Parmenio and Antigonus.

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[1] Dion. Hal. De Legationibus.

The conquerors had a good right to exult in their success; for their glory was all their own. They had not learned from their enemy how to conquer him. It was with their own national arms, and in their own national battle array, that they had overcome weapons and tactics long believed to be invincible. The pilum and the broadsword had vanquished the Macedonian spear. The legion had broken the Macedonian phalanx. Even the elephants, when the surprise produced by their first appearance was over, could cause no disorder in the steady yet flexible battalions of Rome.

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[1] *Anguimanus* is the old Latin epithet for an elephant. Lucretius, ii. 538, v. 1302.

It is said by Florus, and may easily be believed, that the triumph far surpassed in magnificence any that Rome had previously seen. The only spoils which Papirius Cursor and Fabius Maximus could exhibit were flocks and herds, wagons of rude structure, and heaps of spears and helmets. But now, for the first time, the riches of Asia and the arts of Greece adorned a Roman pageant. Plate, fine stuffs, costly furniture, rare animals, exquisite paintings and sculptures, formed part of the procession. At the banquet would be assembled a crowd of warriors and statesmen, among whom Manius Curius Dentatus would take the highest room. Caius Fabricius Luscinus, then, after two Consulships and two triumphs, Censor of the Commonwealth, would doubtless occupy a place of honor at the board. In situations less conspicuous probably lay some of those who were, a few years later, the terror of Carthage: Caius Duilius, the founder of the maritime greatness of his country; Marcus Atilius Regulus, who owed to defeat a renown far higher than that which he had derived from his victories; and Caius Lutatius Catulus, who, while suffering from a grievous wound, fought the great battle of the Ægates, and brought the First Punic War to a triumphant close. It is impossible to recount the names of these eminent citizens, without reflecting that they were all, without exception, Plebeians, and would, but for the ever memorable struggle maintained by Caius Licinius and Lucius Sextius, have been doomed to hide in obscurity, or to waste in civil broils, the capacity and energy which prevailed against Pyrrhus and Hamilcar.

On such a day we may suppose that the patriotic enthusiasm of a Latin poet would vent itself in reiterated shouts of "Io triumphe," such as were uttered by Horace on a far less exciting occasion, and in boasts resembling those which Virgil put into the mouth of Anchises. The superiority of some foreign nations, and especially of the Greeks, in the lazy arts of peace, would be admitted with disdainful candor; but preëminence in all the qualities which fit a people to subdue and govern mankind would be claimed for the Romans.

The following lay belongs to the latest age of Latin ballad-poetry. Nævius and Livius Andronicus were probably among the children whose mothers held them up to see the chariot of Curius go by. The minstrel who sang on that day might possibly have lived to read the first hexameters of Ennius, and to see the first comedies of Plautus. His poem, as might be expected, shows a much wider acquaintance with the geography, manners, and productions of remote nations, than would have been found in compositions of the age of Camillus. But he troubles himself little about dates, and having heard travellers talk with admiration of the Colossus of Rhodes, and of the structures and gardens with which the Macedonian kings of Syria had embellished their residence on the banks of the Orontes, he has never thought of inquiring whether these things existed in the age of Romulus.

THE PROPHECY OF CAPYS

A LAY SUNG AT THE BANQUET IN THE CAPITOL, ON THE DAY WHEREON MANIUS CURIUS DENTATUS, A SECOND TIME CONSUL, TRIUMPHED OVER KING PYRRHUS AND THE TARENTINES, IN THE YEAR OF THE CITY CCCCLXXIX

I

Now slain is King Amulius,
  Of the great Sylvian line,
Who reigned in Alba Longa,
  On the throne of Aventine.
Slain is the Pontiff Camers,
  Who spake the words of doom:
"The children to the Tiber,
  The mother to the tomb."

II

In Alba's lake no fisher
  His net to-day is flinging;
On the dark rind of Alba's oaks
  To-day no axe is ringing;
The yoke hangs o'er the manger;
  The scythe lies in the hay:
Through all the Alban villages
  No work is done to-day.

III

And every Alban burgher
  Hath donned his whitest gown;
And every head in Alba
  Weareth a poplar crown;

And every Alban door-post
  With boughs and flowers is gay,
For to-day the dead are living,
  The lost are found to-day.

IV

They were doomed by a bloody king,
  They were doomed by a lying priest,
They were cast on the raging flood,
  They were tracked by the raging beast;
Raging beast and raging flood
  Alike have spared the prey;
And to-day the dead are living,
  The lost are found to-day.

V

The troubled river knew them,
  And smoothed his yellow foam,
And gently rocked the cradle
  That bore the fate of Rome.
The ravening she-wolf knew them,
  And licked them o'er and o'er,
And gave them of her own fierce milk,
  Rich with raw flesh and gore.
Twenty winters, twenty springs,
  Since then have rolled away;
And to-day the dead are living:
  The lost are found to-day.

VI

Blithe it was to see the twins,
  Right goodly youths and tall,
Marching from Alba Longa
  To their old grandsire's hall.
Along their path fresh garlands
  Are hung from tree to tree:
Before them stride the pipers,
  Piping a note of glee.

VII

On the right goes Romulus,
With arms to the elbows red,
And in his hand a broadsword,
And on the blade a head—
A head in an iron helmet,
With horse-hair hanging down,
A shaggy head, a swarthy head,
Fixed in a ghastly frown—
The head of King Amulius
Of the great Sylvian line,
Who reigned in Alba Longa,
On the throne of Aventine.

VIII

On the left side goes Remus,
With wrists and fingers red,
And in his hand a boar-spear,
And on the point a head—
A wrinkled head and aged,
With silver beard and hair,
And holy fillets round it,
Such as the pontiffs wear—
The head of ancient Camers,
Who spake the words of doom:
"The children to the Tiber;
The mother to the tomb."

IX

Two and two behind the twins
Their trusty comrades go,
Four and forty valiant men,
With club, and axe, and bow.
On each side every hamlet
Pours forth its joyous crowd,
Shouting lads and baying dogs,
And children laughing loud,

And old men weeping fondly
As Rhea's boys go by,
And maids who shriek to see the heads,
Yet, shrieking, press more nigh.

X

So they marched along the lake;
They marched by fold and stall,
By cornfield and by vineyard,
Unto the old man's hall.

XI

In the hall-gate sat Capys,
Capys, the sightless seer;
From head to foot he trembled
As Romulus drew near.
And up stood stiff his thin white hair,
And his blind eyes flashed fire:
"Hail! foster child of the wondrous nurse!
Hail! son of the wondrous sire!

XII

"But thou — what dost thou here
In the old man's peaceful hall?
What doth the eagle in the coop,
The bison in the stall?
Our corn fills many a garner;
Our vines clasp many a tree;
Our flocks are white on many a hill:
But these are not for thee.

XIII

"For thee no treasure ripens
In the Tartessian mine;
For thee no ship brings precious bales
Across the Libyan brine;
Thou shalt not drink from amber;
Thou shalt not rest on down;

Arabia shall not steep thy locks,
Nor Sidon tinge thy gown.

XIV

"Leave gold and myrrh and jewels,
Rich table and soft bed,
To them who of man's seed are born,
Whom woman's milk have fed.
Thou wast not made for lucre,
For pleasure, nor for rest;
Thou, that art sprung from the War-god's loins,
And hast tugged at the she-wolf's breast.

XV

"From sunrise unto sunset
All earth shall hear thy fame:
A glorious city thou shalt build,
And name it by thy name:
And there, unquenched through ages,
Like Vesta's sacred fire,
Shall live the spirit of thy nurse,
The spirit of thy sire.

XVI

"The ox toils through the furrow,
Obedient to the goad;
The patient ass, up flinty paths,
Plods with his weary load:
With whine and bound the spaniel
His master's whistle hears;
And the sheep yields her patiently
To the loud-clashing shears.

XVII

"But thy nurse will hear no master,
Thy nurse will bear no load;
And woe to them that shear her,
And woe to them that goad!

When all the pack, loud baying,
  Her bloody lair surrounds,
She dies in silence, biting hard,
  Amidst the dying hounds.

XVIII

"Pomona loves the orchard;
  And Liber loves the vine;
And Pales loves the straw-built shed
  Warm with the breath of kine;
And Venus loves the whispers
  Of plighted youth and maid,
In April's ivory moonlight
  Beneath the chestnut shade.

XIX

"But thy father loves the clashing
  Of broadsword and of shield:
He loves to drink the steam that reeks
  From the fresh battlefield:
He smiles a smile more dreadful
  Than his own dreadful frown,
When he sees the thick black cloud of smoke
  Go up from the conquered town.

XX

"And such as is the War-god,
  The author of thy line,
And such as she who suckled thee,
  Even such be thou and thine.
Leave to the soft Campanian
  His baths and his perfumes;
Leave to the sordid race of Tyre
  Their dyeing-vats and looms;
Leave to the sons of Carthage
  The rudder and the oar;
Leave to the Greek his marble Nymphs
  And scrolls of wordy lore.

XXI

"Thine, Roman, is the pilum:
  Roman, the sword is thine,
The even trench, the bristling mound,
  The legion's ordered line;
And thine the wheels of triumph,
  Which with their laurelled train
Move slowly up the shouting streets
  To Jove's eternal fane.

XXII

"Beneath thy yoke the Volscian
  Shall vail his lofty brow:
Soft Capua's curled revellers
  Before thy chairs shall bow:
The Lucumoes of Arnus
  Shall quake thy rods to see;
And the proud Samnite's heart of steel
  Shall yield to only thee.

XXIII

"The Gaul shall come against thee
  From the land of snow and night:
Thou shalt give his fair-haired armies
  To the raven and the kite.

XXIV

"The Greek shall come against thee,
  The conqueror of the East.
Beside him stalks to battle
  The huge earth-shaking beast,
The beast on whom the castle
  With all its guards doth stand,
The beast who hath between his eyes
  The serpent for a hand.
First march the bold Epirotes,
  Wedged close with shield and spear

And the ranks of false Tarentum
  Are glittering in the rear.

XXV

"The ranks of false Tarentum
  Like hunted sheep shall fly:
In vain the bold Epirotes
  Shall round their standards die:
And Apennine's gray vultures
  Shall have a noble feast
On the fat and the eyes
  Of the huge earth-shaking beast.

XXVI

"Hurrah! for the good weapons
  That keep the War-god's land.
Hurrah! for Rome's stout pilum
  In a stout Roman hand.
Hurrah! for Rome's short broadsword
  That through the thick array
Of levelled spears and serried shields
  Hews deep its gory way.

XXVII

"Hurrah! for the great triumph
  That stretches many a mile.
Hurrah! for the wan captives
  That pass in endless file.
Ho! bold Epirotes, whither
  Hath the Red King ta'en flight?
Ho! dogs of false Tarentum,
  Is not the gown washed white?

XXVIII

"Hurrah! for the great triumph
  That stretches many a mile.
Hurrah! for the rich dye of Tyre,
  And the fine web of Nile,

The helmets gay with plumage
Torn from the pheasant's wings,
The belts set thick with starry gem
That shone on Indian kings,
The urns of massy silver,
The goblets rough with gold,
The many-colored tablets bright
With loves and wars of old,
The stone that breathes and struggles,
The brass that seems to speak ; —
Such cunning they who dwell on high
Have given unto the Greek.

XXIX

" Hurrah ! for Manius Curius,
The bravest son of Rome,
Thrice in utmost need sent forth,
Thrice drawn in triumph home.
Weave, weave, for Manius Curius
The third embroidered gown :
Make ready the third lofty car,
And twine the third green crown ;
And yoke the steeds of Rosea
With necks like a bended bow,
And deck the bull, Mevania's bull,
The bull as white as snow.

XXX

" Blest and thrice blest the Roman
Who sees Rome's brightest day,
Who sees that long victorious pomp
Wind down the Sacred Way,
And through the bellowing Forum,
And round the Suppliant's Grove,
Up to the everlasting gates
Of Capitolian Jove.

XXXI

"Then where, o'er two bright havens,
The towers of Corinth frown;
Where the gigantic King of Day
On his own Rhodes looks down;
Where soft Orontes murmurs
Beneath the laurel shades;
Where Nile reflects the endless length
Of dark red colonnades;
Where in the still deep water,
Sheltered from waves and blasts,
Bristles the dusky forest
Of Byrsa's thousand masts;
Where fur-clad hunters wander
Amidst the northern ice;
Where through the sand of morning-land
The camel bears the spice;
Where Atlas flings his shadow
Far o'er the western foam,
Shall be great fear on all who hear
The mighty name of Rome."

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS, INSCRIPTIONS, ETC.

EPITAPH ON HENRY MARTYN

1812

HERE Martyn lies. In Manhood's early bloom
The Christian Hero finds a Pagan tomb.
Religion, sorrowing o'er her favorite son,
Points to the glorious trophies that he won.
Eternal trophies! not with carnage red,
Not stained with tears by hapless captives shed,
But trophies of the Cross! for that dear name,
Through every form of danger, death and shame,
Onward he journeyed to a happier shore,
Where danger, death, and shame assault no more.

LINES TO THE MEMORY OF PITT

1813

Oh, Britain! dear Isle, when the annals of story
  Shall tell of the deeds that thy children have done,
When the strains of each poet shall sing of their glory,
  And the triumphs their skill and their valor have won;

When the olive and palm in thy chaplet are blended,
  When thy arts, and thy fame, and thy commerce increase,
When thy arms through the uttermost coasts are extended,
  And thy war is triumphant, and happy thy peace;

When the ocean, whose waves like a rampart flow round thee,
  Conveying thy mandates to every shore,
And the empire of nature no longer can bound thee,
  And the world be the scene of thy conquests no more:

Remember the man who in sorrow and danger,
  When thy glory was set, and thy spirit was low,
When thy hopes were o'erturned by the arms of the stranger,
  And thy banners displayed in the halls of the foe,

Stood forth in the tempest of doubt and disaster,
  Unaided, and single, the danger to brave,
Asserted thy claims, and the rights of his master,
  Preserved thee to conquer, and saved thee to save.

A RADICAL WAR SONG

1820

Awake, arise, the hour is come,
For rows and revolutions;
There 's no receipt like pike and drum
For crazy constitutions.
Close, close the shop! Break, break the loom,
Desert your hearths and furrows,
And throng in arms to seal the doom
Of England's rotten boroughs.

We 'll stretch that tort'ring Castlereagh
On his own Dublin rack, sir;
We 'll drown the King in Eau de vie,
The Laureate in his sack, sir.
Old Eldon and his sordid hag
In molten gold we 'll smother,
And stifle in his own green bag
The Doctor and his brother.

In chains we 'll hang in fair Guildhall
The City's famed Recorder,
And next on proud St. Stephen's fall,
Though Wynne should squeak to order.
In vain our tyrants then shall try
To 'scape our martial law, sir;
In vain the trembling Speaker cry
That "Strangers must withdraw," sir.

Copley to hang offends no text;
A rat is not a man, sir:

With schedules and with tax bills next
We 'll bury pious Van, sir.
The slaves who loved the Income Tax,
We 'll crush by scores, like mites, sir,
And him, the wretch who freed the blacks,
And more enslaved the whites, sir.

The peer shall dangle from his gate,
The bishop from his steeple,
Till all recanting, own, the State
Means nothing but the People.
We 'll fix the Church's revenues
On Apostolic basis,
One coat, one scrip, one pair of shoes
Shall pay their strange grimaces.

We 'll strap the bar's deluding train
In their own darling halter,
And with his big church Bible brain
The parson at the altar.
Hail, glorious hour, when fair Reform
Shall bless our longing nation,
And Hunt receive commands to form
A new administration.

Carlisle shall sit enthroned, where sat
Our Cranmer and our Secker;
And Watson show his snow-white hat
In England's rich Exchequer.
The breast of Thistlewood shall wear
Our Wellesley's star and sash, man;
And many a mausoleum fair
Shall rise to honest Cashman.

Then, then beneath the nine-tailed cat
Shall they who used it writhe, sir;
And curates lean, and rectors fat,
Shall dig the ground they tithe, sir.

Down with your Bayleys, and your Bests,
  Your Giffords, and your Gurneys:
We 'll clear the island of the pests,
  Which mortals name attorneys.

Down with your sheriffs, and your mayors
  Your registrars, and proctors,
We 'll live without the lawyer's cares,
  And die without the doctor's.
No discontented fair shall pout
  To see her spouse so stupid;
We 'll tread the torch of Hymen out,
  And live content with Cupid.

Then, when the high-born and the great
  Are humbled to our level,
On all the wealth of Church and State,
  Like aldermen, we 'll revel.
We 'll live when hushed the battle's din,
  In smoking and in cards, sir,
In drinking unexcised gin,
  And wooing fair Poissardes, sir.

IVRY

A SONG OF THE HUGUENOTS

1824

Now glory to the Lord of Hosts, from whom all glories are!
And glory to our Sovereign Liege, King Henry of Navarre!
Now let there be the merry sound of music and of dance,
Through thy corn-fields green, and sunny vines, O pleasant land of France!
And thou, Rochelle, our own Rochelle, proud city of the waters,
Again let rapture light the eyes of all thy mourning daughters.
As thou wert constant in our ills, be joyous in our joy,
For cold, and stiff, and still are they who wrought thy walls annoy.
Hurrah! Hurrah! a single field hath turned the chance of war,
Hurrah! Hurrah! for Ivry, and Henry of Navarre.

Oh! how our hearts were beating when, at the dawn of day,
We saw the army of the League drawn out in long array;
With all its priest-led citizens, and all its rebel-peers,
And Appenzel's stout infantry, and Egmont's Flemish spears.
There rode the brood of false Lorraine, the curses of our land;
And dark Mayenne was in the midst, a truncheon in his hand:

And, as we looked on them, we thought of Seine's empurpled flood,
And good Coligni's hoary hair all dabbled with his blood;
And we cried unto the living God, who rules the fate of war,
To fight for his own holy name, and Henry of Navarre.

The king is come to marshal us, in all his armor drest,
And he has bound a snow-white plume upon his gallant crest.
He looked upon his people, and a tear was in his eye;
He looked upon the traitors, and his glance was stern and high.
Right graciously he smiled on us, as rolled from wing to wing,
Down all our line, a deafening shout, "God save our Lord the King!"
"An if my standard-bearer fall, as fall full well he may,
For never saw I promise yet of such a bloody fray,
Press where ye see my white plume shine, amidst the ranks of war,
And be your oriflamme to-day the helmet of Navarre."

Hurrah! the foes are moving. Hark to the mingled din
Of fife, and steed, and trump, and drum, and roaring culverin!
The fiery Duke is pricking fast across St. André's plain,
With all the hireling chivalry of Guelders and Almayne.
Now by the lips of those ye love, fair gentlemen of France,
Charge for the golden lilies, — upon them with the lance.
A thousand spurs are striking deep, a thousand spears in rest,
A thousand knights are pressing close behind the snow-white crest;
And in they burst, and on they rushed, while, like a guiding star,
Amidst the thickest carnage blazed the helmet of Navarre.

Now, God be praised, the day is ours. Mayenne hath turned his rein.
D'Aumale hath cried for quarter. The Flemish count is slain.
Their ranks are breaking like thin clouds before a Biscay gale;
The field is heaped with bleeding steeds, and flags, and cloven mail.
And then we thought on vengeance, and, all along our van,
"Remember St. Bartholomew!" was passed from man to man.
But out spake gentle Henry, "No Frenchman is my foe:
Down, down, with every foreigner, but let your brethren go."
Oh! was there ever such a knight, in friendship or in war,
As our Sovereign Lord, King Henry, the soldier of Navarre?

Right well fought all the Frenchmen who fought for France to-day;
And many a lordly banner God gave them for a prey.
But we of the religion have borne us best in fight;
And the good Lord of Rosny hath ta'en the cornet white.
Our own true Maximilian the cornet white hath ta'en,
The cornet white with crosses black, the flag of false Lorraine.
Up with it high; unfurl it wide; that all the host may know
How God hath humbled the proud house which wrought his church such woe.
Then on the ground, while trumpets sound their loudest point of war,
Fling the red shreds, a footcloth meet for Henry of Navarre.

Ho! maidens of Vienna; ho! matrons of Lucerne;
Weep, weep, and rend your hair for those who never shall return.
Ho! Philip, send, for charity, thy Mexican pistoles,
That Antwerp monks may sing a mass for thy poor spearmen's souls.
Ho! gallant nobles of the League, look that your arms be bright;
Ho! burghers of St. Genevieve, keep watch and ward to-night.
For our God hath crushed the tyrant, our God hath raised the slave,
And mocked the counsel of the wise, and the valor of the brave;
Then glory to his holy name, from whom all glories are;
And glory to our Sovereign Lord, King Henry of Navarre.

THE BATTLE OF MONCONTOUR

1824

Oh, weep for Moncontour! Oh! weep for the hour
When the children of darkness and evil had power,
When the horsemen of Valois triumphantly trod
On the bosoms that bled for their rights and their God.

Oh, weep for Moncontour! Oh! weep for the slain,
Who for faith and for freedom lay slaughtered in vain;
Oh, weep for the living, who linger to bear
The renegade's shame, or the exile's despair.

One look, one last look, to our cots and our towers,
To the rows of our vines, and the beds of our flowers,
To the church where the bones of our fathers decayed,
Where we fondly had deemed that our own would be laid.

Alas! we must leave thee, dear desolate home,
To the spearmen of Uri, the shavelings of Rome,
To the serpent of Florence, the vulture of Spain,
To the pride of Anjou, and the guile of Lorraine.

Farewell to thy fountains, farewell to thy shades,
To the song of thy youths, and the dance of thy maids,
To the breath of thy gardens, the hum of thy bees,
And the long waving line of the blue Pyrenees.

Farewell, and forever. The priest and the slave
May rule in the halls of the free and the brave.
Our hearths we abandon; our lands we resign;
But, Father, we kneel to no altar but thine.

SONGS OF THE CIVIL WAR

I

THE BATTLE OF NASEBY, BY OBADIAH BIND-THEIR-KINGS-IN-CHAINS-AND-THEIR-NOBLES-WITH-LINKS-OF-IRON, SERJEANT IN IRETON'S REGIMENT

1824

Oh! wherefore come ye forth, in triumph from the North,
With your hands, and your feet, and your raiment all red?
And wherefore doth your rout send forth a joyous shout?
And whence be the grapes of the wine-press which ye tread?

Oh, evil was the root, and bitter was the fruit,
And crimson was the juice of the vintage that we trod;
For we trampled on the throng of the haughty and the strong,
Who sat in the high places, and slew the saints of God.

It was about the noon of a glorious day of June,
That we saw their banners dance, and their cuirasses shine,
And the Man of Blood was there, with his long essenced hair,
And Astley, and Sir Marmaduke, and Rupert of the Rhine.

Like a servant of the Lord, with his Bible and his sword,
The General rode along us to form us to the fight,
When a murmuring sound broke out, and swell'd into a shout,
Among the godless horsemen upon the tyrant's right.

And hark! like the roar of the billows on the shore,
The cry of battle rises along their charging line!
For God! for the Cause! for the Church, for the Laws!
For Charles King of England, and Rupert of the Rhine!

The furious German comes, with his clarions and his drums,
His bravoes of Alsatia, and pages of Whitehall;
They are bursting on our flanks. Grasp your pikes, close your ranks;
For Rupert never comes but to conquer or to fall.

They are here! They rush on! We are broken! We are gone!
Our left is borne before them like stubble on the blast.
O Lord, put forth thy might! O Lord, defend the right!
Stand back to back, in God's name, and fight it to the last.

Stout Skippon hath a wound; the centre hath given ground:
Hark! hark! — What means the trampling of horsemen on our rear?
Whose banner do I see, boys? 'T is he, thank God, 't is he, boys.
Bear up another minute: brave Oliver is here.

Their heads all stooping low, their points all in a row,
Like a whirlwind on the trees, like a deluge on the dykes,
Our cuirassiers have burst on the ranks of the Accurst,
And at a shock have scattered the forest of his pikes.

Fast, fast, the gallants ride, in some safe nook to hide
Their coward heads, predestined to rot on Temple Bar:
And he — he turns, he flies: — shame on those cruel eyes
That bore to look on torture, and dare not look on war.

Ho! comrades, scour the plain; and ere ye strip the slain,
First give another stab to make your search secure,
Then shake from sleeves and pockets their broad-pieces and lockets,
The tokens of the wanton, the plunder of the poor.

Fools! your doublets shone with gold, and your hearts were gay and bold,
When you kissed your lily hands to your lemans to-day;
And to-morrow shall the fox, from her chambers in the rocks,
Lead forth her tawny cubs to howl above the prey.

Where be your tongues that late mocked at heaven and hell and fate,
And the fingers that once were so busy with your blades,
Your perfum'd satin clothes, your catches and your oaths,
Your stage-plays and your sonnets, your diamonds and your spades?

Down, down, forever down, with the mitre and the crown,
With the Belial of the Court, and the Mammon of the Pope;
There is woe in Oxford Halls; there is wail in Durham's Stalls:
The Jesuit smites his bosom; the Bishop rends his cope.

And She of the seven hills shall mourn her children's ills,
And tremble when she thinks on the edge of England's sword;
And the Kings of earth in fear shall shudder when they hear
What the hand of God hath wrought for the Houses and the Word.

II

THE CAVALIER'S MARCH TO LONDON

1824

> Here warlike cobblers railed from tops of casks
> At lords and love-locks, monarchy and masques.
> There many a graceless page blaspheming reel'd,
> From his dear cards and bumpers, to the field:
> The famished rooks, impatient of delay,
> Gnaw their cogg'd dice and curse the lingering prey:
> His sad Andromache, with fruitless care,
> Paints her wan lips and braids her borrowed hair:
> For Church and King he quits his favorite arts,
> Forsakes his Knaves, forsakes his Queen of Hearts:
> For Church and King he burns to stain with gore
> His doublet, stained with nought but sack before.
>
> From a MS. Poem.

To horse! to horse! brave Cavaliers!
  To horse for Church and Crown!
Strike, strike your tents! snatch up your spears!
  And ho for London town!
The imperial harlot, doom'd a prey
  To our avenging fires,
Sends up the voice of her dismay
  From all her hundred spires.

The Strand resounds with maidens' shrieks,
  The 'Change with merchants' sighs,
And blushes stand on brazen cheeks,
  And tears in iron eyes;
And, pale with fasting and with fright,
  Each Puritan Committee
Hath summon'd forth to prayer and fight
  The Roundheads of the City.

And soon shall London's sentries hear
  The thunder of our drum,

And London's dames, in wilder fear,
  Shall cry, Alack! They come!
Fling the fascines; — tear up the spikes;
  And forward, one and all.
Down, down with all their train-band pikes,
  Down with their mud-built wall.

Quarter? — Foul fall your whining noise,
  Ye recreant spawn of fraud!
No quarter! Think on Strafford, boys.
  No quarter! Think on Laud.
What ho! The craven slaves retire.
  On! Trample them to mud,
No quarter! — Charge. — No quarter! — Fire.
  No quarter! — Blood! — Blood! — Blood! —

Where next? In sooth there lacks no witch,
  Brave lads, to tell us where,
Sure London's sons be passing rich,
  Her daughters wondrous fair:
And let that dastard be the theme
  Of many a board's derision,
Who quails for sermon, cuff, or scream
  Of any sweet Precisian.

Their lean divines, of solemn brow,
  Sworn foes to throne and steeple,
From an unwonted pulpit now
  Shall edify the people:
Till the tir'd hangman, in despair,
  Shall curse his blunted shears,
And vainly pinch, and scrape, and tear,
  Around their leathern ears.

We 'll hang, above his own Guildhall,
  The city's grave Recorder,
And on the den of thieves we 'll fall,
  Though Pym should speak to order.

In vain the lank-haired gang shall try
  To cheat our martial law;
In vain shall Lenthall trembling cry
  That strangers must withdraw.

Of bench and woolsack, tub and chair,
  We 'll build a glorious pyre,
And tons of rebel parchment there
  Shall crackle in the fire.
With them shall perish, cheek by jowl,
  Petition, psalm, and libel,
The Colonel's canting muster-roll,
  The Chaplain's dog-ear'd Bible.

We 'll tread a measure round the blaze
  Where England's pest expires,
And lead along the dance's maze
  The beauties of the friars:
Then smiles in every face shall shine,
  And joy in every soul.
Bring forth, bring forth the oldest wine,
  And crown the largest bowl.

And as with nod and laugh ye sip
  The goblet's rich carnation,
Whose bursting bubbles seem to tip
  The wink of invitation;
Drink to those names, — those glorious names, —
  Those names no time shall sever, —
Drink, in a draught as deep as Thames,
  Our Church and King forever!

SERMON IN A CHURCHYARD

1825

LET pious Damon take his seat,
  With mincing step, and languid smile,
And scatter from his 'kerchief sweet,
  Sabæan odors o'er the aisle;
And spread his little jewelled hand,
  And smile round all the parish beauties,
And pat his curls, and smooth his band,
  Meet prelude to his saintly duties.

Let the thronged audience press and stare,
  Let stifled maidens ply the fan,
Admire his doctrines and his hair,
  And whisper, "What a good young man!"
While he explains what seems most clear,
  So clearly that it seems perplexed,
I 'll stay, and read my sermon here;
  And skulls, and bones, shall be the text.

Art thou the jilted dupe of fame?
  Dost thou with jealous anger pine
Whene'er she sounds some other name,
  With fonder emphasis than thine?
To thee I preach; draw near; attend!
  Look on these bones, thou fool, and see
Where all her scorns and favors end,
  What Byron is, and thou must be.

Dost thou revere, or praise, or trust
  Some clod like those that here we spurn;

Some thing that sprang like thee from dust,
  And shall like thee to dust return?
Dost thou rate statesmen, heroes, wits,
  At one sear leaf or wandering feather?
Behold the black, damp, narrow pits,
  Where they and thou must lie together.

Dost thou beneath the smile or frown
  Of some vain woman bend thy knee?
Here take thy stand, and trample down
  Things that were once as fair as she.
Here rave of her ten thousand graces,
  Bosom, and lip, and eye, and chin,
While, as in scorn, the fleshless faces
  Of Hamiltons and Waldegraves grin.

Whate'er thy losses or thy gains,
  Whate'er thy projects or thy fears,
Whate'er the joys, whate'er the pains,
  That prompt thy baby smiles and tears,
Come to my school, and thou shalt learn,
  In one short hour of placid thought,
A stoicism, more deep, more stern,
  Than ever Zeno's porch hath taught.

The plots and feats of those that press
  To seize on titles, wealth, or power,
Shall seem to thee a game of chess,
  Devised to pass a tedious hour.
What matters it to him who fights
  For shows of unsubstantial good,
Whether his Kings, and Queens, and Knights,
  Be things of flesh, or things of wood?

We check, and take; exult and fret;
  Our plans extend, our passions rise,

Till in our ardor we forget
How worthless is the victor's prize.
Soon fades the spell, soon comes the night:
Say will it not be then the same,
Whether we played the black or white,
Whether we lost or won the game?

Dost thou among these hillocks stray,
O'er some dear idol's tomb to moan?
Know that thy foot is on the clay
Of hearts once wretched as thy own.
How many a father's anxious schemes,
How many rapturous thoughts of lovers,
How many a mother's cherished dreams,
The swelling turf before thee covers!

Here for the living, and the dead,
The weepers and the friends they weep,
Hath been ordained the same cold bed,
The same dark night, the same long sleep.
Why shouldst thou writhe, and sob, and rave
O'er those, with whom thou soon must be?
Death his own sting shall cure — the grave
Shall vanquish its own victory.

Here learn that all the griefs and joys,
Which now torment, which now beguile,
Are children's hurts, and children's toys,
Scarce worthy of one bitter smile.
Here learn that pulpit, throne, and press,
Sword, sceptre, lyre, alike are frail,
That Science is a blind man's guess,
And History a nurse's tale.

Here learn that glory and disgrace,
Wisdom and folly, pass away,

That mirth hath its appointed space,
  That sorrow is but for a day;
That all we love, and all we hate,
  That all we hope, and all we fear,
Each mood of mind, each turn of fate,
  Must end in dust and silence here.

TRANSLATION FROM A. V. ARNAULT

Fables: Livre v., Fable 16[1]

1826

"Thou poor leaf, so sear and frail,
Sport of every wanton gale,
Whence, and whither, dost thou fly,
Through this bleak autumnal sky?"
"On a noble oak I grew,
Green, and broad, and fair to view;
But the Monarch of the shade
By the tempest low was laid.
From that time, I wander o'er
Wood, and valley, hill, and moor,
Wheresoe'er the wind is blowing,
Nothing caring, nothing knowing:
Thither go I, whither goes,
Glory's laurel, Beauty's rose."

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[1] De ta tige détachée,
Pauvre feuille desséchée,
Où vas-tu? — Je n'en sais rien.
L'orage a frappé le chêne
Qui seul était mon soutien.
De son inconstante haleine,
Le zéphyr ou l'aquilon
Depuis ce jour me promène
De la forêt à la plaine,
De la montagne au vallon.
Je vais où le vent me mène,
Sans me plaindre ou m'effrayer,
Je vais où va toute chose,
Où va la feuille de rose
Et la feuille de laurier.

DIES IRÆ

1826

On that great, that awful day,
This vain world shall pass away.
Thus the Sibyl sang of old,
Thus hath Holy David told.
There shall be a deadly fear
When the Avenger shall appear,
And unveiled before his eye
All the works of man shall lie.
Hark! to the great trumpet's tones
Pealing o'er the place of bones:
Hark! it waketh from their bed
All the nations of the dead, —
In a countless throng to meet,
At the eternal judgment seat.
Nature sickens with dismay,
Death may not retain his prey;
And before the Maker stand
All the creatures of his hand.
The great book shall be unfurled,
Whereby God shall judge the world:
What was distant shall be near,
What was hidden shall be clear.
To what shelter shall I fly?
To what guardian shall I cry?
Oh, in that destroying hour,
Source of goodness, Source of power,
Show thou, of thine own free grace,
Help unto a helpless race.
Though I plead not at thy throne

Aught that I for thee have done,
Do not thou unmindful be,
Of what thou hast borne for me:
Of the wandering, of the scorn,
Of the scourge, and of the thorn.
Jesus, hast *thou* borne the pain,
And hath all been borne in vain?
Shall thy vengeance smite the head
For whose ransom thou hast bled?
Thou, whose dying blessing gave
Glory to a guilty slave:
Thou, who from the crew unclean
Didst release the Magdalene:
Shall not mercy vast and free,
Evermore be found in thee?
Father, turn on me thine eyes,
See my blushes, hear my cries;
Faint though be the cries I make,
Save me, for thy mercy's sake,
From the worm, and from the fire,
From the torments of thine ire.
Fold me with the sheep that stand
Pure and safe at thy right hand.
Hear thy guilty child implore thee,
Rolling in the dust before thee.
Oh, the horrors of that day!
When this frame of sinful clay,
Starting from its burial-place,
Must behold thee face to face.
Hear and pity, hear and aid,
Spare the creatures thou hast made.
Mercy, mercy, save, forgive,
Oh, who shall look on thee and live?

THE MARRIAGE OF TIRZAH AND AHIRAD

GENESIS VI. 3

1827

It is the dead of night:
Yet more than noonday light
Beams far and wide from many a gorgeous hall.
Unnumbered harps are tinkling,
Unnumbered lamps are twinkling,
In the great city of the fourfold wall.
By the brazen castle's moat,
The sentry hums a livelier note.
The ship-boy chants a shriller lay
From the galleys in the bay.
Shout, and laugh, and hurrying feet
Sound from mart and square and street,
From the breezy laurel shades,
From the granite colonnades,
From the golden statue's base,
From the stately market-place,
Where, upreared by captive hands,
The great Tower of Triumph stands,
All its pillars in a blaze
With the many-colored rays,
Which lanthorns of ten thousand dyes
Shed on ten thousand panoplies.
But closest is the throng,
And loudest is the song,
In that sweet garden by the river's side,
The abyss of myrtle bowers,
The wilderness of flowers,

Where Cain hath built the palace of his pride.
Such palace ne'er shall be again
Among the dwindling race of men.
From all its threescore gates the light
Of gold and steel afar was thrown;
Two hundred cubits rose in height
The outer wall of polished stone.
On the top was ample space
For a gallant chariot race.
Near either parapet a bed
Of the richest mould was spread,
Where amidst flowers of every scent and hue
Rich orange trees, and palms, and giant cedars grew.

In the mansion's public court
All is revel, song, and sport;
For there, till morn shall tint the east,
Menials and guards prolong the feast.
The boards with painted vessels shine;
The marble cisterns foam with wine.
A hundred dancing girls are there
With zoneless waists and streaming hair;
And countless eyes with ardor gaze,
And countless hands the measure beat,
As mix and part in amorous maze
Those floating arms and bounding feet.
But none of all the race of Cain,
Save those whom he hath deigned to grace
With yellow robe and sapphire chain,
May pass beyond that outer space.
For now within the painted hall
The Firstborn keeps high festival.
Before the glittering valves all night
Their post the chosen captains hold,
Above the portal's stately height
The legend flames in lamps of gold:

"In life united and in death
May Tirzah and Ahirad be,
The bravest he of all the sons of Seth,
Of all the house of Cain the loveliest she."

Through all the climates of the earth
This night is given to festal mirth.
The long-continued war is ended.
The long-divided lines are blended.
Ahirad's bow shall now no more
Make fat the wolves with kindred gore.
The vultures shall expect in vain
Their banquet from the sword of Cain.
Without a guard the herds and flocks
Along the frontier moors and rocks
From eve to morn may roam;
Nor shriek, nor shout, nor reddened sky
Shall warn the startled hind to fly
From his beloved home.
Nor to the pier shall burghers crowd
With straining necks and faces pale,
And think that in each flitting cloud
They see a hostile sail.
The peasant without fear shall guide
Down smooth canal or river wide
His painted bark of cane,
Fraught, for some proud bazaar's arcades,
With chestnuts from his native shades,
And wine, and milk, and grain.
Search round the peopled globe to-night,
Explore each continent and isle,
There is no door without a light,
No face without a smile.
The noblest chiefs of either race,
From north and south, from west and east,
Crowd to the painted hall to grace
The pomp of that atoning feast.

With widening eyes and laboring breath
Stand the fair-haired sons of Seth,
As bursts upon their dazzled sight
The endless avenue of light,
The bowers of tulip, rose, and palm,
The thousand cressets fed with balm,
The silken vests, the boards piled high
With amber, gold, and ivory,
The crystal founts whence sparkling flow
The richest wines o'er beds of snow,
The walls where blaze in living dyes
The king's three hundred victories.
The heralds point the fitting seat
To every guest in order meet,
And place the highest in degree
Nearest th' imperial canopy.
Beneath its broad and gorgeous fold,
With naked swords and shields of gold,
Stood the seven princes of the tribes of Nod.
Upon an ermine carpet lay
Two tiger cubs in furious play,
Beneath the emerald throne where sat the signed of God.

Over that ample forehead white
The thousandth year returneth.
Still, on its commanding height,
With a fierce and blood-red light,
The fiery token burneth.
Wheresoe'er that mystic star
Blazeth in the van of war,
Back recoil before its ray
Shield and banner, bow and spear,
Maddened horses break away
From the trembling charioteer.
The fear of that stern king doth lie
On all that live beneath the sky;
All shrink before the mark of his despair,
The seal of that great curse which he alone can bear

Blazing in pearls and diamonds' sheen,
  Tirzah, the young Ahirad's bride,
Of humankind the destined queen,
  Sits by her great forefather's side.
The jetty curls, the forehead high,
  The swanlike neck, the eagle face,
The glowing cheek, the rich dark eye,
  Proclaim her of the elder race.
With flowing locks of auburn hue,
And features smooth and eye of blue,
  Timid in love as brave in arms,
The gentle heir of Seth askance
Snatches a bashful, ardent glance
  At her majestic charms;
Blest when across that brow high musing flashes
    A deeper tint of rose,
Thrice blest when from beneath the silken lashes
    Of her proud eye she throws
The smile of blended fondness and disdain
Which marks the daughters of the house of Cain.

All hearts are light around the hall
Save his who is the lord of all.
The painted roofs, the attendant train,
The lights, the banquet, all are vain.
He sees them not. His fancy strays
To other scenes and other days.
A cot by a lone forest's edge,
  A fountain murmuring through the trees,
A garden with a wild flower hedge,
  Whence sounds the music of the bees,
A little flock of sheep at rest
Upon a mountain's swarthy breast.
On his rude spade he seems to lean
  Beside the well-remembered stone,
Rejoicing o'er the promise green
  Of the first harvest man hath sown.

He sees his mother's tears;
His father's voice he hears,
Kind as when first it praised his youthful skill.
And soon a seraph-child,
In boyish rapture wild,
With a light crook comes bounding from the hill,
Kisses his hands, and strokes his face,
And nestles close in his embrace.
In his adamantine eye
None might discern his agony;
But they who had grown hoary next his side,
And read his stern dark face with deepest skill,
Could trace strange meanings in that lip of pride,
Which for one moment quivered and was still.
No time for them to mark or him to feel
Those inward stings; for clarion, flute, and lyre
And the rich voices of a countless quire,
Burst on the ear in one triumphant peal.
In breathless transport sits the admiring throng,
As sink and swell the notes of Jubal's lofty song.

"Sound the timbrel, strike the lyre,
Wake the trumpet's blast of fire,
Till the gilded arches ring.
Empire, victory, and fame,
Be ascribed unto the name
Of our father and our king.
Of the deeds which he hath done,
Of the spoils which he hath won,
Let his grateful children sing.

"When the deadly fight was fought,
When the great revenge was wrought,
When on the slaughtered victims lay
The minion stiff and cold as they,
Doomed to exile, sealed with flame,
From the west the wanderer came.

Six-score years and six he strayed
A hunter through the forest shade.
The lion's shaggy jaws he tore,
To earth he smote the foaming boar,
He crushed the dragon's fiery crest,
And scaled the condor's dizzy nest;
Till hardy sons and daughters fair
Increased around his woodland lair.
Then his victorious bow unstrung
On the great bison's horn he hung.
Giraffe and elk he left to hold
  The wilderness of boughs in peace,
And trained his youth to pen the fold,
  To press the cream and weave the fleece.
As shrunk the streamlet in its bed,
  As black and scant the herbage grew,
O'er endless plains his flocks he led
  Still to new brooks and pastures new.
So strayed he till the white pavilions
Of his camp were told by millions,
Till his children's households seven
Were numerous as the stars of heaven.
Then he bade us rove no more;
  And in the place that pleased him best,
On the great river's fertile shore,
  He fixed the city of his rest.
He taught us then to bind the sheaves,
  To strain the palm's delicious milk,
And from the dark green mulberry leaves
  To cull the filmy silk.
Then first from straw-built mansions roamed
  O'er flower-beds trim the skilful bees;
Then first the purple wine-vats foamed
  Around the laughing peasant's knees;
And olive-yards, and orchards green,
O'er all the hills of Nod were seen.

"Of our father and our king
Let his grateful children sing.
From him our race its being draws,
His are our arts, and his our laws.
Like himself he bade us be,
Proud, and brave, and fierce, and free.
True, through every turn of fate,
In our friendship and our hate.
Calm to watch, yet prompt to dare;
Quick to feel, yet firm to bear;
Only timid, only weak,
Before sweet woman's eye and cheek.
We will not serve, we will not know,
The God who is our father's foe.
In our proud cities to his name
No temples rise, no altars flame.
Our flocks of sheep, our groves of spice,
To him afford no sacrifice.
Enough that once the house of Cain
Hath courted with oblation vain
        The sullen power above.
Henceforth we bear the yoke no more;
The only gods whom we adore
        Are glory, vengeance, love.

"Of our father and our king
Let his grateful children sing.
What eye of living thing may brook
On his blazing brow to look?
What might of living thing may stand
Against the strength of his right hand?
First he led his armies forth
Against the Mammoths of the north,
What time they wasted in their pride
Pasture and vineyard far and wide.
Then the White River's icy flood
Was thawed with fire and dyed with blood,

And heard for many a league the sound
Of the pine forests blazing round,
And the death-howl and trampling din
Of the gigantic herd within.
From the surging sea of flame
Forth the tortured monsters came;
As of breakers on the shore
Was their onset and their roar;
As the cedar-trees of God
Stood the stately ranks of Nod.
One long night and one short day
The sword was lifted up to slay.
  Then marched the firstborn and his sons
O'er the white ashes of the wood,
And counted of that savage brood
  Nine times nine thousand skeletons.

"On the snow with carnage red
The wood is piled, the skins are spread.
A thousand fires illume the sky;
Round each a hundred warriors lie.
But, long ere half the night was spent,
Forth thundered from the golden tent
    The rousing voice of Cain.
A thousand trumps in answer rang,
And fast to arms the warriors sprang
    O'er all the frozen plain.
A herald from the wealthy bay
Hath come with tidings of dismay.
From the western ocean's coast
Seth hath led a countless host,
And vows to slay with fire and sword
All who call not on the Lord.
His archers hold the mountain forts;
His light-armed ships blockade the ports;
  His horsemen tread the harvest down.
On twelve proud bridges he hath passed

The river dark with many a mast,
And pitched his mighty camp at last
Before the imperial town.

"On the south and on the west,
Closely was the city prest.
Before us lay the hostile powers.
The breach was wide between the towers.
Pulse and meal within were sold
For a double weight of gold.
Our mighty father hath gone forth
Two hundred marches to the north.
Yet in that extreme of ill
We stoutly kept his city still;
And swore beneath his royal wall,
Like his true sons, to fight and fall.

"Hark, hark, to gong and horn,
Clarion, and fife, and drum,
The morn, the fortieth morn,
Fixed for the great assault is come.
Between the camp and city spreads
A waving sea of helmed heads.
From the royal car of Seth
Was hung the blood-red flag of death:
At sight of that thrice-hallowed sign
Wide flew at once each banner's fold;
The captains clashed their arms of gold
The war-cry of Elohim rolled
Far down their endless line.
On the northern hills afar
Pealed an answering note of war.
Soon the dust in whirlwinds driven,
Rushed across the northern heaven.
Beneath its shroud came thick and loud
The tramp as of a countless crowd;
And at intervals were seen

Lance and hauberk glancing sheen;
And at intervals were heard
Charger's neigh and battle word.

"Oh! what a rapturous cry
From all the city's thousand spires arose,
With what a look the hollow eye
Of the lean watchman glared upon the foes,
With what a yell of joy the mother pressed
The moaning baby to her withered breast,
When through the swarthy cloud that veiled the plain
Burst on his children's sight the flaming brow of Cain."

There paused perforce that noble song;
For from all the joyous throng,
Burst forth a rapturous shout which drowned
Singer's voice and trumpet's sound.
Thrice that stormy clamor fell,
Thrice rose again with mightier swell.
The last and loudest roar of all
Had died along the painted wall.
The crowd was hushed; the minstrel train
Prepared to strike the chords again;
When on each ear distinctly smote
A low and wild and wailing note.
It moans again. In mute amaze
Menials, and guests, and harpers gaze.
They look above, beneath, around,
No shape doth own that mournful sound.
It comes not from the tuneful quire;
It comes not from the feasting peers;
There is no tone of earthly lyre
So soft, so sad, so full of tears.
Then a strange horror came on all
Who sat at that high festival.
The far-famed harp, the harp of gold,
Dropped from Jubal's trembling hold.

Frantic with dismay the bride
Clung to her Ahirad's side.
And the corpse-like hue of dread
Ahirad's haughty face o'erspread.
Yet not even in that agony of awe
Did the young leader of the fair-haired race
From Tirzah's shuddering grasp his hand withdraw,
Or turn his eyes from Tirzah's livid face.
The tigers to their lord retreat,
And crouch and whine beneath his feet.
Prone sink to earth the golden-shielded seven.
All hearts are cowed save his alone
Who sits upon the emerald throne;
For he hath heard Elohim speak from heaven.
Still thunders in his ear the peal;
Still blazes on his front the seal:
And on the soul of the proud king
No terror of created thing
From sky, or earth, or hell, hath power
Since that unutterable hour.

He rose to speak, but paused, and listening stood,
Not daunted, but in sad and curious mood,
With knitted brow, and searching eye of fire.
A deathlike silence sank on all around,
And through the boundless space was heard no sound,
Save the soft tones of that mysterious lyre.
Broken, faint, and low,
At first the numbers flow.
Louder, deeper, quicker, still
Into one fierce peal they swell,
And the echoing palace fill
With a strange funereal yell.
A voice comes forth. But what, or where?
On the earth, or in the air?
Like the midnight winds that blow
Round a lone cottage in the snow,

With howling swell and sighing fall,
It wails along the trophied hall.
In such a wild and dreary moan
  The watches of the Seraphim
  Poured out all night their plaintive hymn
Before the eternal throne,
Then when from many a heavenly eye
  Drops as of earthly pity fell
For her who had aspired too high,
  For him who loved too well;
When, stunned by grief, the gentle pair
From the nuptial garden fair,
Linked in a sorrowful caress,
Strayed through the untrodden wilderness;
And close behind their footsteps came
The desolating sword of flame,
And drooped the cedared alley's pride,
And fountains shrank, and roses died.

"Rejoice, O Son of God, rejoice,"
Sang that melancholy voice,
"Rejoice, the maid is fair to see;
The bower is decked for her and thee;
The ivory lamps around it throw
A soft and pure and mellow glow.
Where'er the chastened lustre falls
On roof or cornice, floor or walls,
Woven of pink and rose appear
Such words as love delights to hear.
The breath of myrrh, the lute's soft sound,
Float through the moonlight galleries round.
O'er beds of violet and through groves of spice,
  Lead thy proud bride into the nuptial bower;
For thou hast bought her with a fearful price,
  And she hath dowered thee with a fearful dower.
The price is life. The dower is death.
  Accursed loss! Accursed gain!

For her thou givest the blessedness of Seth,
And to thine arms she brings the curse of Cain.
Round the dark curtains of the fiery throne
Pauses awhile the voice of sacred song:
From all the angelic ranks goes forth a groan,
'How long, O Lord, how long?'
The still small voice makes answer, 'Wait and see,
O sons of glory, what the end shall be.'

"But, in the outer darkness of the place
Where God hath shown his power without his grace,
Is laughter and the sound of glad acclaim,
Loud as when, on wings of fire,
Fulfilled of his malign desire,
From Paradise the conquering serpent came.
The giant ruler of the morning star
From off his fiery bed
Lifts high his stately head,
Which Michael's sword hath marked with many a scar.
At his voice the pit of hell
Answers with a joyous yell,
And flings her dusky portals wide
For the bridegroom and the bride.

"But louder still shall be the din
In the halls of Death and Sin,
When the full measure runneth o'er,
When mercy can endure no more,
When he who vainly proffers grace,
Comes in his fury to deface
The fair creation of his hand;
When from the heaven streams down amain
For forty days the sheeted rain;
And from his ancient barriers free,
With a deafening roar the sea
Comes foaming up the land.
Mother, cast thy babe aside:

Bridegroom, quit thy virgin bride:
Brother, pass thy brother by:
'T is for life, for life, ye fly.
Along the drear horizon raves
The swift-advancing line of waves.
On, on, their frothy crests appear
Each moment nearer and more near.
Urge the dromedary's speed;
Spur to death the reeling steed;
If perchance ye yet may gain
The mountains that o'erhang the plain.

"O thou haughty land of Nod,
Hear the sentence of thy God.
Thou hast said, 'Of all the hills
Whence, after autumn rains, the rills
In silver trickle down,
The fairest is that mountain white
Which intercepts the morning light
From Cain's imperial town.
On its first and gentlest swell
Are pleasant halls where nobles dwell;
And marble porticos are seen
Peeping through terraced gardens green.
Above are olives, palms, and vines;
And higher yet the dark-blue pines;
And highest on the summit shines
The crest of everlasting ice.
Here let the God of Abel own
That human art hath wonders shown
Beyond his boasted paradise.'

"Therefore on that proud mountain's crown
Thy few surviving sons and daughters
Shall see their latest sun go down
Upon a boundless waste of waters.
None salutes and none replies;
None heaves a groan or breathes a prayer;

They crouch on earth with tearless eyes,
  And clenched hands, and bristling hair.
The rain pours on : no star illumes
  The blackness of the roaring sky.
And each successive billow booms
  Nigher still and still more nigh.
And now upon the howling blast
The wreaths of spray come thick and fast ;
And a great billow by the tempest curled
  Falls with a thundering crash ; and all is o'er.
And what is left of all this glorious world ?
  A sky without a beam, a sea without a shore.

"O thou fair land, where from their starry home
Cherub and seraph oft delight to roam,
Thou city of the thousand towers,
  Thou palace of the golden stairs,
Ye gardens of perennial flowers,
  Ye moated gates, ye breezy squares ;
Ye parks amidst whose branches high
Oft peers the squirrel's sparkling eye ;
Ye vineyards, in whose trellised shade
Pipes many a youth to many a maid ;
Ye ports where rides the gallant ship ;
  Ye marts where wealthy burghers meet ;
Ye dark green lanes which know the trip
  Of woman's conscious feet ;
Ye grassy meads where, when the day is done,
  The shepherd pens his fold ;
Ye purple moors on which the setting sun
  Leaves a rich fringe of gold ;
Ye wintry deserts where the larches grow ;
Ye mountains on whose everlasting snow
  No human foot hath trod ;
  Many a fathom shall ye sleep
  Beneath the gray and endless deep,
In the great day of the revenge of God."

THE COUNTRY CLERGYMAN'S TRIP TO CAMBRIDGE

AN ELECTION BALLAD

1827

As I sat down to breakfast in state,
  At my living of Tithing-cum-Boring,
With Betty beside me to wait,
  Came a rap that almost beat the door in.
I laid down my basin of tea,
  And Betty ceased spreading the toast,
"As sure as a gun, sir," said she,
  "That must be the knock of the post."

A letter — and free — bring it here —
  I have no correspondent who franks.
No! yes! Can it be? Why, my dear,
  'T is our glorious, our Protestant Bankes.
"Dear sir, as I know you desire
  That the Church should receive due protection,
I humbly presume to require
  Your aid at the Cambridge election.

"It has lately been brought to my knowledge,
  That the Ministers fully design
To suppress each cathedral and college,
  And eject every learned divine.
To assist this detestable scheme
  Three nuncios from Rome are come over;
They left Calais on Monday by steam,
  And landed to dinner at Dover.

"An army of grim Cordeliers,
Well furnished with relics and vermin,
Will follow, Lord Westmoreland fears,
To effect what their chiefs may determine.
Lollard's bower, good authorities say,
Is again fitting up for a prison;
And a wood-merchant told me to-day
'T is a wonder how faggots have risen.

"The finance scheme of Canning contains
A new Easter-offering tax;
And he means to devote all the gains
To a bounty on thumb-screws and racks.
Your living, so neat and compact —
Pray, don't let the news give you pain! —
Is promised, I know for a fact,
To an olive-faced Padre from Spain."

I read, and I felt my heart bleed,
Sore wounded with horror and pity;
So I flew, with all possible speed,
To our Protestant champion's committee.
True gentlemen, kind and well-bred!
No fleering! no distance! no scorn!
They asked after my wife who is dead,
And my children who never were born.

They then, like high-principled Tories,
Called our Sovereign unjust and unsteady,
And assailed him with scandalous stories,
Till the coach for the voters was ready.
That coach might be well called a casket
Of learning and brotherly love:
There were parsons in boot and in basket;
There were parsons below and above.

There were Sneaker and Griper, a pair
Who stick to Lord Mulesby like leeches;

A smug chaplain of plausible air,
Who writes my Lord Goslingham's speeches.
Dr. Buzz, who alone is a host,
Who, with arguments weighty as lead,
Proves six times a week in the Post
That flesh somehow differs from bread.

Dr. Nimrod, whose orthodox toes
Are seldom withdrawn from the stirrup;
Dr. Humdrum, whose eloquence flows,
Like droppings of sweet poppy syrup;
Dr. Rosygill puffing and fanning,
And wiping away perspiration;
Dr. Humbug, who proved Mr. Canning
The beast in St. John's Revelation.

A layman can scarce form a notion
Of our wonderful talk on the road;
Of the learning, the wit, and devotion,
Which almost each syllable showed:
Why divided allegiance agrees
So ill with our free constitution;
How Catholics swear as they please,
In hope of the priest's absolution;

How the Bishop of Norwich had bartered
His faith for a legate's commission;
How Lyndhurst, afraid to be martyr'd,
Had stooped to a base coalition;
How Papists are cased from compassion
By bigotry, stronger than steel;
How burning would soon come in fashion,
And how very bad it must feel.

We were all so much touched and excited
By a subject so direly sublime,
That the rules of politeness were slighted,
And we all of us talked at a time;

And in tones, which each moment grew louder,
  Told how we should dress for the show,
And where we should fasten the powder,
  And if we should bellow or no.

Thus from subject to subject we ran,
  And the journey passed pleasantly o'er,
Till at last Dr. Humdrum began;
  From that time I remember no more.
At Ware he commenced his prelection,
  In the dullest of clerical drones;
And when next I regained recollection
  We were rumbling o'er Trumpington stones.

SONG

1827

Oh, stay, Madonna! stay;
'T is not the dawn of day
That marks the skies with yonder opal streak:
The stars in silence shine;
Then press thy lips to mine,
And rest upon my neck thy fervid cheek.

Oh, sleep, Madonna! sleep;
Leave me to watch and weep
O'er the sad memory of departed joys,
O'er hope's extinguished beam,
O'er fancy's vanished dream,
O'er all that nature gives and man destroys.

Oh, wake, Madonna! wake;
Even now the purple lake
Is dappled o'er with amber flakes of light;
A glow is on the hill;
And every trickling rill
In golden threads leaps down from yonder height.

Oh, fly, Madonna! fly,
Lest day and envy spy
What only love and night may safely know:
Fly, and tread softly, dear!
Lest those who hate us hear
The sounds of thy light footsteps as they go.

THE DELIVERANCE OF VIENNA

TRANSLATED FROM VINCENZIO DA FILICAIA

Published in the Winter's Wreath, Liverpool, 1828

"Le corde d' oro elette," etc.

THE chords, the sacred chords of gold,
Strike, O Muse, in measure bold;
And frame a sparkling wreath of joyous songs
For that great God to whom revenge belongs.
Who shall resist his might,
Who marshals for the fight
Earthquake and thunder, hurricane and flame?
He smote the haughty race
Of unbelieving Thrace,
And turned their rage to fear, their pride to shame.
He looked in wrath from high,
Upon their vast array;
And, in the twinkling of an eye,
Tambour, and trump, and battle-cry,
And steeds, and turbaned infantry,
Passed like a dream away.
Such power defends the mansions of the just:
But, like a city without walls,
The grandeur of the mortal falls
Who glories in his strength, and makes not God his trust.

The proud blasphemers thought all earth their own;
They deemed that soon the whirlwind of their ire
Would sweep down tower and palace, dome and spire,

The Christian altars and the Augustan throne.
And soon, they cried, shall Austria bow
To the dust her lofty brow.
The princedoms of Almayne
Shall wear the Phrygian chain;
In humbler waves shall vassal Tiber roll;
And Rome, a slave forlorn,
Her laurelled tresses shorn,
Shall feel our iron in her inmost soul.
Who shall bid the torrent stay?
Who shall bar the lightning's way?
Who arrest the advancing van
Of the fiery Ottoman?

As the curling smoke wreaths fly
When fresh breezes clear the sky,
Passed away each swelling boast
Of the misbelieving host.
From the Hebrus rolling far
Came the murky cloud of war,
And in shower and tempest dread
Burst on Austria's 'fenceless head.
But not for vaunt or threat
Didst Thou, O Lord, forget
The flock so dearly bought, and loved so well.
Even in the very hour
Of guilty pride and power
Full on the circumcised Thy vengeance fell.
Then the fields were heaped with dead,
Then the streams with gore were red,
And every bird of prey, and every beast,
From wood and cavern thronged to Thy great feast.

What terror seized the fiends obscene of Nile!
How wildly, in his place of doom beneath,
Arabia's lying prophet gnashed his teeth,
And cursed his blighted hopes and wasted guile!

When, at the bidding of Thy sovereign might,
Flew on their destined path
Thy messengers of wrath,
Riding on storms and wrapped in deepest night.
The Phthian mountains saw,
And quaked with mystic awe:
The proud Sultana of the Straits bowed down
Her jewelled neck and her embattled crown.
The miscreants, as they raised their eyes
Glaring defiance on Thy skies,
Saw adverse winds and clouds display
The terrors of their black array; —
Saw each portentous star
Whose fiery aspect turned of yore to flight
The iron chariots of the Canaanite
Gird its bright harness for a deadlier war.

Beneath Thy withering look
Their limbs with palsy shook;
Scattered on earth the crescent banners lay;
Trembled with panic fear
Sabre and targe and spear,
Through the proud armies of the rising day.
Faint was each heart, unnerved each hand;
And, if they strove to charge or stand,
Their efforts were as vain
As his who, scared in feverish sleep
By evil dreams, essays to leap,
Then backward falls again.
With a crash of wild dismay,
Their ten thousand ranks gave way;
Fast they broke, and fast they fled;
Trampled, mangled, dying, dead,
Horse and horseman mingled lay;
Till the mountains of the slain
Raised the valleys to the plain.

Be all the glory to Thy name divine!
The swords were ours; the arm, O Lord, was Thine.

Therefore to Thee, beneath whose footstool wait
The powers which erring man calls Chance and Fate,
To Thee who hast laid low
The pride of Europe's foe,
And taught Byzantium's sullen lords to fear,
I pour my spirit out
In a triumphant shout,
And call all ages and all lands to hear.
Thou who evermore endurest,
Loftiest, mightiest, wisest, purest,
Thou whose will destroys or saves,
Dread of tyrants, hope of slaves,
The wreath of glory is from Thee,
And the red sword of victory.
There where exulting Danube's flood
Runs stained with Islam's noblest blood
From that tremendous field,
There where in mosque the tyrants met,
And from the crier's minaret
Unholy summons pealed,
Pure shrines and temples now shall be
Decked for a worship worthy Thee.
To Thee thy whole creation pays
With mystic sympathy its praise,
The air, the earth, the seas:
The day shines forth with livelier beam;
There is a smile upon the stream,
An anthem on the breeze.
Glory, they cry, to Him whose might
Hath turned the barbarous foe to flight,
Whose arm protects with power divine
The city of his favored line.
The caves, the woods, the rocks, repeat the sound;
The everlasting hills roll the long echoes round.

But, if Thy rescued church may dare
Still to besiege Thy throne with prayer,
Sheathe not, we implore Thee, Lord,
Sheathe not Thy victorious sword.
Still Panonia pines away,
Vassal of a double sway:
Still Thy servants groan in chains,
Still the race which hates Thee reigns:
Part the living from the dead:
Join the members to the head:
Snatch Thine own sheep from yon fell monster's hold;
Let one kind shepherd rule one undivided fold.

He is the victor, only he
Who reaps the fruits of victory.
We conquered once in vain,
When foamed the Ionian waves with gore,
And heaped Lepanto's stormy shore
With wrecks and Moslem slain.
Yet wretched Cyprus never broke
The Syrian tyrant's iron yoke.
Shall the twice-vanquished foe
Again repeat his blow?
Shall Europe's sword be hung to rust in peace?
No — let the red-cross ranks
Of the triumphant Franks
Bear swift deliverance to the shrines of Greece,
And in her inmost heart let Asia feel
The avenging plagues of Western fire and steel,

O God! for one short moment raise
The veil which hides those glorious days.
The flying foes I see Thee urge
Even to the river's headlong verge.
Close on their rear the loud uproar
Of fierce pursuit from Ister's shore
Comes pealing on the wind;

The Rab's wild waters are before,
The Christian sword behind.
Sons of perdition, speed your flight,
No earthly spear is in the rest;
No earthly champion leads to fight
The warriors of the West.
The Lord of Hosts asserts His old renown,
Scatters, and smites, and slays, and tramples down.
Fast, fast, beyond what mortal tongue can say,
Or mortal fancy dream,
He rushes on his prey:
Till, with the terrors of the wondrous theme
Bewildered and appalled, I cease to sing,
And close my dazzled eye, and rest my wearied wing.

THE ARMADA

A FRAGMENT

1832

Attend, all ye who list to hear our noble England's praise;
I tell of the thrice famous deeds she wrought in ancient days,
When that great fleet invincible against her bore in vain
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of Spain.

It was about the lovely close of a warm summer day,
There came a gallant merchant-ship full sail to Plymouth Bay;
Her crew hath seen Castile's black fleet, beyond Aurigny's isle,
At earliest twilight, on the waves lie heaving many a mile.
At sunrise she escaped their van, by God's especial grace;
And the tall Pinta, till the noon, had held her close in chase.
Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along the wall;
The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgecumbe's lofty hall;
Many a light fishing-bark put out to pry along the coast,
And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland many a post.
With his white hair unbonneted, the stout old sheriff comes;
Behind him march the halberdiers; before him sound the drums;
His yeomen round the market cross make clear an ample space;

For there behooves him to set up the standard of Her Grace.
And haughtily the trumpets peal, and gayly dance the bells,
As slow upon the laboring wind the royal blazon swells.
Look how the Lion of the sea lifts up his ancient crown,
And underneath his deadly paw treads the gay lilies down.
So stalked he when he turned to flight, on that famed Picard field,
Bohemia's plume, and Genoa's bow, and Cæsar's eagle shield.
So glared he when at Agincourt in wrath he turned to bay,
And crushed and torn beneath his claws the princely hunters lay.
Ho! strike the flagstaff deep, sir Knight; ho! scatter flowers, fair maids;
Ho! gunners, fire a loud salute; ho! gallants, draw your blades;
Thou sun, shine on her joyously; ye breezes, waft her wide;
Our glorious SEMPER EADEM, the banner of our pride.

The freshening breeze of eve unfurled that banner's massy fold;
The parting gleam of sunshine kissed that haughty scroll of gold;
Night sank upon the dusky beach, and on the purple sea,
Such night in England ne'er had been, nor e'er again shall be.
From Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn to Milford Bay,
That time of slumber was as bright and busy as the day;
For swift to east and swift to west the ghastly war-flame spread,
High on St. Michael's Mount it shone: it shone on Beachy Head.
Far on the deep the Spaniard saw, along each southern shire,
Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling points of fire.

The fisher left his skiff to rock on Tamar's glittering waves;
The rugged miners poured to war from Mendip's sunless caves;
O'er Longleat's towers, o'er Cranbourne's oaks, the fiery herald flew:
He roused the shepherds of Stonehenge, the rangers of Beaulieu.
Right sharp and quick the bells all night rang out from Bristol town,
And ere the day three hundred horse had met on Clifton down;
The sentinel on Whitehall gate looked forth into the night,
And saw o'erhanging Richmond Hill the streak of blood-red light.
Then bugle's note and cannon's roar the deathlike silence broke,
And with one start, and with one cry, the royal city woke.
At once on all her stately gates arose the answering fires;
At once the wild alarum clashed from all her reeling spires;
From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud the voice of fear;
And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back a louder cheer:
And from the furthest wards was heard the rush of hurrying feet,
And the broad streams of pikes and flags rushed down each roaring street;
And broader still became the blaze, and louder still the din,
As fast from every village round the horse came spurring in:
And eastward straight from wild Blackheath the warlike errand went,
And roused in many an ancient hall the gallant squires of Kent.

Southward from Surrey's pleasant hills flew those bright couriers forth;
High on bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor they started for the north;
And on, and on, without a pause untired they bounded still:
All night from tower to tower they sprang; they sprang from hill to hill:
Till the proud peak unfurled the flag o'er Darwin's rocky dales,
Till like volcanoes flared to heaven the stormy hills of Wales,
Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's lonely height,
Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's crest of light,
Till broad and fierce the star came forth on Ely's stately fane,
And tower and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the boundless plain;
Till Belvoir's lordly terraces the sign to Lincoln sent,
And Lincoln sped the message on o'er the wide vale of Trent;
Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burnt on Gaunt's embattled pile,
And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers of Carlisle.

. . . .

INSCRIPTION

ON THE

STATUE OF LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK

AT CALCUTTA

1835

To
William Cavendish Bentinck,
Who, during seven years, ruled India with eminent
Prudence, Integrity, and Benevolence:
Who, placed at the head of a great Empire, never laid
aside
The simplicity and moderation of a private citizen:
Who infused into Oriental despotism the spirit of
British Freedom:
Who never forgot that the end of Government is
The happiness of the Governed:
Who abolished cruel rites:
Who effaced humiliating distinctions:
Who gave liberty to the expression of public opinion:
Whose constant study it was, to elevate the intellectual
And moral character of the Nations committed to his
charge:
This Monument
Was erected by men,
Who, differing in Race, in Manners, in Language,
And in Religion,
Cherish, with equal veneration and gratitude,
The memory of his wise, upright,
And paternal Administration.

EPITAPH ON SIR BENJAMIN HEATH MALKIN

AT CALCUTTA

1837

This monument
Is sacred to the memory
Of
Sir Benjamin Heath Malkin, Knight,
One of the Judges of The Supreme Court of Judicature:
A man eminently distinguished
By his literary and scientific attainments,
By his professional learning and ability,
By the clearness and accuracy of his intellect,
By diligence, by patience, by firmness, by love of truth,
By public spirit, ardent and disinterested,
Yet always under the guidance of discretion,
By rigid uprightness, by unostentatious piety,
By the serenity of his temper,
And by the benevolence of his heart.

He was born on the 29th September, 1797. He died on the 21st October, 1837.

THE LAST BUCCANEER

1839

The winds were yelling, the waves were swelling,
The sky was black and drear,
When the crew with eyes of flame brought the ship without a name
Alongside the last Buccaneer.

"Whence flies your sloop full sail before so fierce a gale,
When all others drive bare on the seas?
Say, come ye from the shore of the holy Salvador,
Or the gulf of the rich Caribbees?"

"From a shore no search hath found, from a gulf no line can sound,
Without rudder or needle we steer;
Above, below, our bark, dies the sea fowl and the shark,
As we fly by the last Buccaneer.

"To-night there shall be heard on the rocks of Cape de Verde
A loud crash, and a louder roar;
And to-morrow shall the deep, with a heavy moaning, sweep
The corpses and wreck to the shore."

The stately ship of Clyde securely now may ride
In the breath of the citron shades;
And Severn's towering mast securely now flies fast,
Through the sea of the balmy Trades.

From St. Jago's wealthy port, from Havana's royal fort,
  The seaman goes forth without fear;
For since that stormy night not a mortal hath had sight
  Of the flag of the last Buccaneer.

EPITAPH ON A JACOBITE

1845

To my true king I offered free from stain
Courage and faith; vain faith, and courage vain.
For him, I threw lands, honors, wealth, away,
And one dear hope, that was more prized than they.
For him I languished in a foreign clime,
Gray-haired with sorrow in my manhood's prime;
Heard on Lavernia Scargill's whispering trees,
And pined by Arno for my lovelier Tees;
Beheld each night my home in fevered sleep,
Each morning started from the dream to weep;
Till God, who saw me tried too sorely, gave
The resting-place I asked, an early grave.
O thou, whom chance leads to this nameless stone,
From that proud country which was once mine own,
By those white cliffs I never more must see.
By that dear language which I spake like thee,
Forget all feuds, and shed one English tear
O'er English dust. A broken heart lies here.

EPITAPH ON LORD METCALFE

1847

Near this stone is laid
Charles Lord Metcalfe,
A statesman tried in many high offices
And difficult conjunctures,
And found equal to all.
The three greatest Dependencies of the British Crown
Were successively entrusted to his care.
In India, his fortitude, his wisdom,
His probity, and his moderation,
Are held in honorable remembrance
By men of many races, languages, and religions.
In Jamaica, still convulsed by a social revolution,
His prudence calmed the evil passions
Which long suffering had engendered in one class
And long domination in another.
In Canada, not yet recovered from the calamities of civil war,
He reconciled contending factions
To each other, and to the Mother Country.
Costly monuments in Asiatic and American cities
Attest the gratitude of the nations which he ruled.
This tablet records the sorrow and the pride
With which his memory is cherished by his family.

TRANSLATION FROM PLAUTUS

Act IV. Sc. vii.

1850

[The author passed a part of the summer and autumn of 1850 at Ventnor, in the Isle of Wight. He usually, when walking alone, had with him a book. On one occasion, as he was loitering in the landslip near Bonchurch, reading the Rudens of Plautus, it struck him that it might be an interesting experiment to attempt to produce something which might be supposed to resemble passages in the lost Greek drama of Diphilus, from which the Rudens appears to have been taken. He selected one passage in the Rudens, of which he then made the following version, which he afterwards copied out at the request of a friend to whom he had repeated it.]

Dæmones. O Gripe, Gripe, in ætate hominum plurimæ
Fiunt transennæ, ubi decipiuntur dolis;
Atque edepol in eas plerumque esca imponitur.
Quam si quis avidus pascit escam avariter,
Decipitur in transenna avaritia sua.
Ille, qui consulte, docte, atque astute cavet,
Diutine uti bene licet partum bene.
Mi istæc videtur præda prædatum irier:
Ut cum majore dote abeat, quam advenerit.
Egone ut, quod ad me adlatum esse alienum sciam,
Calem? Minime istuc faciet noster Dæmones.
Semper cavere hoc sapientes æquissimum est,
Ne conscii sint ipsi maleficiis suis.
Ego, mihi quum lusi, nil moror ullum lucrum.
Gripus. Spectavi ego pridem Comicos ad istum modum
Sapienter dicta dicere, atque iis plaudier,
Quum illos sapientis mores monstrabant poplo;

Sed quum inde suam quisque ibant diversi domum,
Nullus erat illo pacto, ut illi jusserant.[1]

[1] **ΔΑΙΜ** Ὦ Γρῖπε, Γρῖπε, πλεῖστα παγίδων σχήματα
ἴδοι τις ἂν πεπηγμέν' ἐν θνητῶν βίῳ,
καὶ πλεῖστ' ἐπ' αὐτοῖς δελέαθ', ὧν ἐπιθυμίᾳ
ὀρεγόμενός τις ἐν κακοῖς ἁλίσκεται·
ὅστις δ' ἀπιστεῖ καὶ σοφῶς φυλάττεται
καλῶς ἀπολαύει τῶν καλῶς πεπορισμένων.
ἅρπαγμα δ' οὐχ ἅρπαγμ' ὁ λάρναξ οὑτοσὶ,
ἀλλ' αὐτὸς, οἶμαι, μᾶλλον ἁρπάξει τινά.
τόνδ' ἄνδρα κλέπτειν τἀλλότρι' — εὐφήμει, τάλαν·
ταυτήν γε μὴ μαίνοιτο μανίαν Δαιμονῆς.
τόδε γὰρ ἀεὶ σοφοῖσιν εὐλαβητέον,
μή τί ποθ' ἑαυτῷ τις ἀδίκημα συννοῇ·
κέρδη δ' ἔμοιγε πάνθ' ὅσοις εὐφραίνομαι,
κέρδος δ' ἀκερδὲς ὃ τοὐμὸν ἀλγύνει κέαρ.

ΓΡΙΠ. κἀγὼ μὲν ἤδη κωμικῶν ἀκήκοα
σεμνῶς λεγόντων τοιάδε, τοὺς δὲ θεωμένους
κροτεῖν, ματαίοις ἡδομένους σοφίσμασιν·
εἶθ', ὥς ἀπῆλθ' ἕκαστος οἴκαδ', οὐδενὶ
οὐδὲν παρέμεινε τῶν καλῶς εἰρημένων.

VALENTINE

TO THE HON. MARY C. STANHOPE

DAUGHTER OF LORD AND LADY MAHON

1851

Hail, day of Music, day of Love,
On earth below, in air above.
In air the turtle fondly moans,
The linnet pipes in joyous tones;
On earth the postman toils along,
Bent double by huge bales of song,
Where, rich with many a gorgeous dye,
Blazes all Cupid's heraldry —
Myrtles and roses, doves and sparrows,
Love-knots and altars, lamps and arrows.
What nymph without wild hopes and fears
The double rap this morning hears?
Unnumbered lasses, young and fair,
From Bethnal Green to Belgrave Square,
With cheeks high flushed, and hearts loud beating
Await the tender annual greeting.
The loveliest lass of all is mine —
Good morrow to my Valentine!

Good morrow, gentle Child! and then
Again good morrow, and again,
Good morrow following still good morrow,
Without one cloud of strife or sorrow.
And when the god to whom we pay
In jest our homages to-day

Shall come to claim, no more in jest,
His rightful empire o'er thy breast,
Benignant may his aspect be,
His yoke the truest liberty:
And if a tear his power confess,
Be it a tear of happiness.
It shall be so. The Muse displays
The future to her votary's gaze;
Prophetic rage my bosom swells —
I taste the cake — I hear the bells!
From Conduit Street the close array
Of chariots barricades the way
To where I see, with outstretched hand,
Majestic, thy great kinsman stand,[1]
And half unbend his brow of pride,
As welcoming so fair a bride.
Gay favors, thick as flakes of snow,
Brighten St. George's portico:
Within I see the chancel's pale,
The orange flowers, the Brussels veil,
The page on which those fingers white,
Still trembling from the awful rite,
For the last time shall faintly trace
The name of Stanhope's noble race.
I see kind faces round thee pressing,
I hear kind voices whisper blessing;
And with those voices mingles mine —
All good attend my Valentine!

T. B. Macaulay.

St. Valentine's Day, 1851.

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[1] The statue of Mr. Pitt in Hanover Square.

PARAPHRASE OF A PASSAGE IN THE CHRONICLE OF THE MONK OF ST. GALL

1856

[In the summer of 1856, the author travelled with a friend through Lombardy. As they were on the road between Novara and Milan, they were conversing on the subject of the legends relating to that country. The author remarked to his companion that Mr. Panizzi, in the Essay on the Romantic Narrative Poetry of the Italians, prefixed to his edition of Bojardo, had pointed out an instance of the conversion of ballad poetry into prose narrative which strongly confirmed the theory of Perizonius and Niebuhr, upon which The Lays of Ancient Rome are founded; and, after repeating an extract which Mr. Panizzi has given from the chronicle of The Monk of St. Gall, he proceeded to frame a metrical paraphrase. The note in Mr. Panizzi's work (vol. i. p. 123, note *b*) is here copied verbatim.]

"The monk says that Oger was with Desiderius, King of Lombardy, watching the advance of Charlemagne's army. The king often asked Oger where was Charlemagne. Quando videris, inquit, segetem campis inhorrescere, ferreum Padum et Ticinum marinis fluctibus ferro nigrantibus muros civitatis inundantes, tunc est spes Caroli venientis. His nedum expletis primum ad occasum Circino vel Borea cœpit apparere, quasi nubes tenebrosa, quæ diem clarissimam horrentes convertit in umbras. Sed propiante Imperatore, ex armorum splendore, dies omni nocte tenebrosior oborta est inclusis. Tunc visus est ipse ferreus Carolus ferrea galea cristatus, ferreis manicis armillatus, etc., etc. His igitur, quæ ego balbus et edentulus, non ut debui circuitu tardiore diutius explicare tentavi, veridicus speculator Oggerus celerrimo visu contuitus dixit ad Desiderium: Ecce, habes quem tantopere perquisisti. Et hæc dicens, pene exanimis cecidit. (Monach. Sangal. de Reb. Bel. Caroli Magni. lib. ii. § xxvi.) Is this not evidently taken from poetical effusions?"

PARAPHRASE

To Oggier spake King Didier:
"When cometh Charlemagne?
We looked for him in harvest;
We looked for him in rain.

Crops are reaped; and floods are past;
And still he is not here.
Some token show, that we may know
That Charlemagne is near."

Then to the King made answer
Oggier, the christened Dane:
"When stands the iron harvest,
Ripe on the Lombard plain,
That stiff harvest which is reaped
With sword of knight and peer,
Then by that sign ye may divine
That Charlemagne is near.

"When round the Lombard cities
The iron flood shall flow,
A swifter flood than Ticin,
A broader flood than Po,
Frothing white with many a plume
Dark blue with many a spear,
Then by that sign ye may divine
That Charlemagne is near."

LINES WRITTEN ON THE NIGHT OF THE THIRTIETH OF JULY, 1847

AT THE CLOSE OF AN UNSUCCESSFUL CONTEST FOR EDINBURGH

The day of tumult, strife, defeat, was o'er;
  Worn out with toil, and noise, and scorn, and spleen,
I slumbered, and in slumber saw once more
  A room in an old mansion,[1] long unseen.

That room, methought, was curtained from the light;
  Yet through the curtains shone the moon's cold ray
Full on a cradle, where, in linen white,
  Sleeping life's first soft sleep, an infant lay.

Pale flickered on the hearth the dying flame,
  And all was silent in that ancient hall,
Save when by fits on the low night-wind came
  The murmur of the distant waterfall.

And lo! the fairy queens who rule our birth
  Drew nigh to speak the new-born baby's doom:
With noiseless step, which left no trace on earth,
  From gloom they came, and vanished into gloom.

Not deigning on the boy a glance to cast
  Swept careless by the gorgeous Queen of Gain;
More scornful still, the Queen of Fashion passed,
  With mincing gait and sneer of cold disdain.

The Queen of Power tossed high her jewelled head,
  And o'er her shoulder threw a wrathful frown;

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[1] Rothley Temple, Leicestershire.

The Queen of Pleasure on the pillow shed
  Scarce one stray rose-leaf from her fragrant crown.

Still Fay in long procession followed Fay;
  And still the little couch remained unblest:
But, when those wayward sprites had passed away,
  Came One, the last, the mightiest, and the best.

O glorious lady, with the eyes of light
  And laurels clustering round thy lofty brow,
Who by the cradle's side didst watch that night,
  Warbling a sweet strange music, who wast thou?

"Yes, darling, let them go;" so ran the strain:
  "Yes; let them go, gain, fashion, pleasure, power,
And all the busy elves to whose domain
  Belongs the nether sphere, the fleeting hour.

"Without one envious sigh, one anxious scheme,
  The nether sphere, the fleeting hour resign,
Mine is the world of thought, the world of dream,
  Mine all the past, and all the future mine.

"Fortune, that lays in sport the mighty low,
  Age, that to penance turns the joys of youth,
Shall leave untouched the gifts which I bestow,
  The sense of beauty and the thirst of truth.

"Of the fair brotherhood who share my grace,
  I, from thy natal day, pronounce thee free;
And, if for some I keep a nobler place,
  I keep for none a happier than for thee.

"There are who, while to vulgar eyes they seem
  Of all my bounties largely to partake,
Of me as of some rival's handmaid deem,
  And court me but for gain's, power's, fashion's sake.

"To such, though deep their lore, though wide their fame,
Shall my great mysteries be all unknown:
But thou, through good and evil, praise and blame,
Wilt not thou love me for myself alone?

"Yes; thou wilt love me with exceeding love;
And I will tenfold all that love repay,
Still smiling, though the tender may reprove,
Still faithful, though the trusted may betray.

"For aye mine emblem was, and aye shall be,
The ever-during plant whose bough I wear,
Brightest and greenest then, when every tree
That blossoms in the light of Time is bare.

"In the dark hour of shame, I deigned to stand
Before the frowning peers at Bacon's side:
On a far shore I smoothed with tender hand,
Through months of pain, the sleepless bed of Hyde;

"I brought the wise and brave of ancient days
To cheer the cell where Raleigh pined alone;
I lighted Milton's darkness with the blaze
Of the bright ranks that guard the eternal throne.

"And even so, my child, it is my pleasure
That thou not then alone shouldst feel me nigh,
When in domestic bliss and studious leisure,
Thy weeks uncounted come, uncounted fly;

"Not then alone, when myriads, closely pressed
Around thy car the shout of triumph raise;
Nor when, in gilded drawing-rooms, thy breast
Swells at the sweeter sound of woman's praise.

"No: when on restless night dawns cheerless morrow,
When weary soul and wasting body pine,

Thine am I still, in danger, sickness, sorrow,
In conflict, obloquy, want, exile, thine;

"Thine, where on mountain waves the snowbirds scream,
Where more than Thule's winter barbs the breeze,
Where scarce, through lowering clouds, one sickly gleam
Lights the drear May-day of Antarctic seas;

"Thine, when around thy litter's track all day
White sandhills shall reflect the blinding glare;
Thine, when, through forests breathing death, thy way
All night shall wind by many a tiger's lair;

"Thine most, when friends turn pale, when traitors fly,
When, hard beset, thy spirit, justly proud,
For truth, peace, freedom, mercy, dares defy
A sullen priesthood and a raving crowd.

"Amidst the din of all things fell and vile,
Hate's yell, and envy's hiss, and folly's bray,
Remember me; and with an unforced smile
See riches, baubles, flatterers, pass away.

"Yes: they will pass away; nor deem it strange:
They come and go, as comes and goes the sea:
And let them come and go; thou, through all change,
Fix thy firm gaze on virtue and on me."

EXCURSIONS IN LITERATURE

FRAGMENTS OF A ROMAN TALE

Knight's Quarterly Magazine, June, 1823

. . . .

It was an hour after noon. Ligarius was returning from the Campus Martius. He strolled through one of the streets which led to the Forum, settling his gown, and calculating the odds on the gladiators who were to fence at the approaching Saturnalia. While thus occupied, he overtook Flaminius, who, with a heavy step and a melancholy face, was sauntering in the same direction. The light-hearted young man plucked him by the sleeve.

"Good-day, Flaminius. Are you to be of Catiline's party this evening?"

"Not I."

"Why so? Your little Tarentine girl will break her heart."

"No matter. Catiline has the best cooks and the finest wine in Rome. There are charming women at his parties. But the twelve-line board and the dice-box pay for all. The gods confound me if I did not lose two millions of sesterces last night. My villa at Tibur, and all the statues that my father the prætor brought from Ephesus, must go to the auctioneer. That is a high price, you will acknowledge, even for Phœnicopters, Chian, and Callinice."

"High indeed, by Pollux!"

"And that is not the worst. I saw several of the leading senators this morning. Strange things are whispered in the higher political circles."

"The gods confound the political circles! I have hated the name of politician ever since Sylla's proscription, when I was within a moment of having my throat cut by a politician, who took me for another politician. While there is a cask of Falernian in Campania, or a girl in the Suburra, I shall be too well employed to think on the subject."

"You will do well," said Flaminius gravely, "to bestow some little consideration upon it at present. Otherwise, I fear, you will soon renew your acquaintance with politicians, in a manner quite as unpleasant as that to which you allude."

"Averting gods! what do you mean?"

"I will tell you. There are rumors of conspiracy. The order of things established by Lucius Sylla has excited the disgust of the people, and of a large party of the nobles. Some violent convulsion is expected."

"What is that to me? I suppose that they will hardly proscribe the vintners and gladiators, or pass a law compelling every citizen to take a wife."

"You do not understand. Catiline is supposed to be the author of the revolutionary schemes. You must have heard bold opinions at his table repeatedly."

"I never listen to any opinions upon such subjects, bold or timid."

"Look to it. Your name has been mentioned."

"Mine! good gods! I call Heaven to witness that I never so much as mentioned Senate, Consul, or Comitia, in Catiline's house."

"Nobody suspects you of any participation in the inmost counsels of the party. But our great men surmise that you are among those whom he has bribed so high with beauty, or entangled so deeply in distress, that they are no longer their own masters. I shall never set foot within his threshold again. I have been solemnly warned by men who understand public affairs; and I advise you to be cautious."

The friends had now turned into the Forum, which was thronged with the gay and elegant youth of Rome. "I can tell you more," continued Flaminius; "somebody was remarking to the Consul yesterday how loosely a certain acquaintance of ours tied his girdle. 'Let him look to himself,' said Cicero, 'or the state may find a tighter girdle for his neck.'"

"Good gods! who is it? You cannot surely mean"—

"There he is."

Flaminius pointed to a man who was pacing up and down the Forum at a little distance from them. He was in the prime of manhood. His personal advantages were extremely striking, and were displayed with an extravagant but not ungraceful foppery. His gown waved in loose folds; his long dark curls were dressed with exquisite art, and shone and steamed with odors; his step and gesture exhibited an elegant and commanding figure in every posture of polite languor. But his countenance formed a singular contrast to the general appearance of his person. The high and imperial brow, the keen aquiline features, the compressed mouth, the penetrating eye, indicated the highest degree of ability and decision. He seemed absorbed in intense meditation. With eyes fixed on the ground, and lips working in thought, he sauntered round the area, apparently unconscious how many of the young gallants of Rome were envying the taste of his dress, and the ease of his fashionable stagger.

"Good Heaven!" said Ligarius, "Caius Cæsar is as unlikely to be in a plot as I am."

"Not at all."

"He does nothing but game, feast, intrigue, read Greek, and write verses."

"You know nothing of Cæsar. Though he rarely addresses the Senate, he is considered as the finest speaker there, after the Consul. His influence with the multitude is immense. He will serve his rivals in public life as he served me last night at Catiline's. We were playing at the twelve-lines.[1] Immense stakes. He laughed all the time, chatted with Valeria over his shoulder, kissed her hand between every two moves, and scarcely looked at the board. I thought that I had him. All at once I found my counters driven into the corner. Not a piece to move, by Hercules! It cost me two millions of sesterces. All the gods and goddesses confound him for it!"

"As to Valeria," said Ligarius, "I forgot to ask whether you have heard the news."

"Not a word. What?"

"I was told at the baths to-day that Cæsar escorted the lady home. Unfortunately old Quintus Lutatius had come back from his villa in Campania, in a whim of jealousy. He was not expected for three days. There was a fine tumult. The old fool called for his sword and his slaves, cursed his wife, and swore that he would cut Cæsar's throat."

"And Cæsar?"

"He laughed, quoted Anacreon, trussed his gown round his left arm, closed with Quintus, flung him down, twisted his sword out of his hand, burst through the attendants, ran a freedman through the shoulder, and was in the street in an instant."

"Well done! Here he comes. Good-day, Caius."

Cæsar lifted his head at the salutation. His air of deep abstraction vanished; and he extended a hand to each of the friends.

"How are you after your last night's exploit?"

"As well as possible," said Cæsar, laughing.

"In truth we should rather ask how Quintus Lutatius is."

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[1] *Duodecim scripta*, a game of mixed chance and skill, which seems to have been very fashionable in the higher circles of Rome. The famous lawyer Mucius was renowned for his skill in it. (Cic. Orat. i. 50.)

"He, I understand, is as well as can be expected of a man with a faithless spouse and a broken head. His freedman is most seriously hurt. Poor fellow! he shall have half of whatever I win to-night. Flaminius, you shall have your revenge at Catiline's."

"You are very kind. I do not intend to be at Catiline's till I wish to part with my town house. My villa is gone already."

"Not at Catiline's, base spirit! You are not of his mind, my gallant Ligarius? Dice, Chian, and the loveliest Greek singing-girl that was ever seen. Think of that, Ligarius. By Venus! she almost made me adore her, by telling me that I talked Greek with the most Attic accent that she had heard in Italy."

"I doubt she will not say the same of me," replied Ligarius. "I am just as able to decipher an obelisk as to read a line of Homer."

"You barbarous Scythian, who had the care of your education?"

"An old fool, — a Greek pedant, — a Stoic. He told me that pain was no evil, and flogged me as if he thought so. At last one day, in the middle of a lecture, I set fire to his enormous filthy beard, singed his face, and sent him roaring out of the house. There ended my studies. From that time to this I have had as little to do with Greece as the wine that your poor old friend Lutatius calls his delicious Samian."

"Well done, Ligarius. I hate a Stoic. I wish Marcus Cato had a beard, that you might singe it for him. The fool talked his two hours in the Senate yesterday, without changing a muscle of his face. He looked as savage and as motionless as the masque in which Roscius acted Alecto. I detest everything connected with him."

"Except his sister, Servilia."

"True. She is a lovely woman."

"They say that you have told her so, Caius."

"So I have."

"And that she was not angry."

"What woman is?"

"Aye, — but they say" —

"No matter what they say. Common fame lies like a Greek rhetorician. You might know so much, Ligarius, without reading the philosophers. But come, I will introduce you to little dark-eyed Zoe."

"I tell you I can speak no Greek."

"More shame for you. It is high time that you should begin. You will never have such a charming instructress. Of what was your father thinking when he sent for an old Stoic with a long beard to teach you? There is no language-mistress like a handsome woman. When I was at Athens, I learnt more Greek from a pretty flower-girl in the Peiræus than from all the Portico and the Academy. She was no Stoic, Heaven knows. But come along to Zoe. I will be your interpreter. Woo her in honest Latin, and I will turn it into elegant Greek between the throws of dice. I can make love and mind my game at once, as Flaminius can tell you."

"Well, then, to be plain, Cæsar, Flaminius has been talking to me about plots, and suspicions, and politicians. I never plagued myself with such things since Sylla's and Marius's days; and then I never could see much difference between the parties. All that I am sure of is, that those who meddle with such affairs are generally stabbed or strangled. And, though I like Greek wine and handsome women, I do not wish to risk my neck for them. Now, tell me as a friend, Caius, — is there no danger?"

"Danger!" repeated Cæsar, with a short, fierce, disdainful laugh, "what danger do you apprehend?"

"That you should best know," said Flaminius; "you are far more intimate with Catiline than I. But I advise you to be cautious. The leading men entertain strong suspicions."

Cæsar drew up his figure from its ordinary state of graceful relaxation into an attitude of commanding dignity, and replied in a voice of which the deep and impassioned melody formed a strange contrast to the humorous and affected tone of his ordinary conversation. "Let them suspect. They suspect because they know what they have deserved. What have they done for Rome? What for mankind? Ask the citizens. Ask the provinces. Have they had any other object than to perpetuate their own exclusive power, and to keep us under the yoke of an oligarchical tyranny, which unites in itself the worst evils of every other system, and combines more than Athenian turbulence with more than Persian despotism?"

"Good gods! Cæsar. It is not safe for you to speak, or for us to listen to such things, at such a crisis."

"Judge for yourselves what you will hear. I will judge for myself what I will speak. I was not twenty years old when I defied Lucius Sylla, surrounded by the spears of legionaries and the daggers of assassins. Do you suppose that I stand in awe of his paltry successors, who have inherited a power which they never could have acquired; who would imitate his proscriptions, though they have never equalled his conquests?"

"Pompey is almost as little to be trifled with as Sylla. I heard a consular senator say that, in consequence of the present alarming state of affairs, he would probably be recalled from the command assigned to him by the Manilian law."

"Let him come, — the pupil of Sylla's butcheries, — the gleaner of Lucullus's trophies, — the thief-taker of the Senate."

"For Heaven's sake, Caius! — if you knew what the Consul said" —

"Something about himself, no doubt. Pity that such talents should be coupled with such cowardice and coxcombry. He is the finest speaker living, — infinitely superior to what Hortensius was, in his best days; a charming companion, except when he tells over for the twentieth time all the jokes that he made at Verres's trial. But he is the despicable tool of a despicable party."

"Your language, Caius, convinces me that the reports which have been circulated are not without foundation. I will venture to prophesy that within a few months the republic will pass through a whole Odyssey of strange adventures."

"I believe so; an Odyssey of which Pompey will be the Polyphemus, and Cicero the Siren. I would have the state imitate Ulysses: show no mercy to the former; but contrive, if it can be done, to listen to the enchanting voice of the other, without being seduced by it to destruction."

"But whom can your party produce as rivals to these two famous leaders?"

"Time will show. I would hope that there may arise a man, whose genius to conquer, to conciliate, and to govern, may unite in one cause an oppressed and divided people; may do all that Sylla should have done, and exhibit the magnificent spectacle of a great nation directed by a great mind."

"And where is such a man to be found?"

"Perhaps where you would least expect to find him. Perhaps he may be one whose powers have hitherto been concealed in domestic or literary retirement. Perhaps he may be one who, while waiting for some adequate excitement, for some worthy opportunity, squanders on trifles a genius before which may yet be humbled the sword of Pompey and the gown of Cicero. Perhaps he may now be disputing with a sophist; perhaps prattling with a mistress; perhaps" — and, as he spoke, he turned away, and resumed his lounge — "strolling in the Forum."

. . . .

It was almost midnight. The party had separated. Catiline and Cethegus were still conferring in the supper room, which was, as usual, the highest apartment of the house. It formed a cupola, from which windows opened on the flat roof that surrounded it. To this terrace Zoe had retired. With eyes dimmed with fond and melancholy tears, she leaned over the balustrade, to catch the last glimpse of the departing form of Cæsar, as it grew more and more indistinct in the moonlight. Had he any thought of her? Any love for her? He, the favorite of the high-born beauties of Rome, the most splendid, the most graceful, the most eloquent of its nobles? It could not be. His voice had, indeed, been touchingly soft whenever he addressed her. There had been a fascinating tenderness even in the vivacity of his look and conversation. But such were always the manners of Cæsar towards women. He had wreathed a sprig of myrtle in her hair as she was singing. She took it from her dark ringlets and kissed it, and wept over it, and thought of the sweet legends of her own dear Greece, — of youths and girls who, pining away in hopeless love, had been transformed into flowers by the compassion of the gods; and she wished to become a flower, which Cæsar might sometimes touch, though he should touch it only to weave a crown for some prouder and happier mistress.

She was roused from her musings by the loud step and voice of Cethegus, who was pacing furiously up and down the supper room.

"May all the gods confound me, if Cæsar be not the deepest traitor, or the most miserable idiot, that ever intermeddled with a plot!"

Zoe shuddered. She drew nearer to the window. She stood concealed from observation by the curtain of fine network which hung over the aperture, to exclude the annoying insects of the climate.

"And you, too!" continued Cethegus, turning fiercely on his accomplice, "you to take his part against me! — you, who proposed the scheme yourself!"

"My dear Caius Cethegus, you will not understand me I proposed the scheme; and I will join in executing it. But policy is as necessary to our plans as boldness. I did not wish to startle Cæsar — to lose his coöperation — perhaps to send him off with an information against us to Cicero and Catulus. He was so indignant at your suggestion that all my dissimulation was scarcely sufficient to prevent a total rupture."

"Indignant! The gods confound him! He prated about humanity, and generosity, and moderation. By Hercules! I have not heard such a lecture since I was with Xenochares at Rhodes."

"Cæsar is made up of inconsistencies. He has boundless ambition, unquestioned courage, admirable sagacity. Yet I have frequently observed in him a womanish weakness at the sight of pain. I remember that once one of his slaves was taken ill while carrying his litter. He alighted, put the fellow in his place, and walked home in a fall of snow. I wonder that you could be so ill advised as to talk to him of massacre, and pillage, and conflagration. You might have foreseen that such propositions would disgust a man of his temper."

"I do not know. I have not your self-command, Lucius. I hate such conspirators. What is the use of them? We must have blood — blood, — hacking and tearing work — bloody work!"

"Do not grind your teeth, my dear Caius; and lay down the carving knife. By Hercules! you have cut up all the stuffing of the couch."

"No matter; we shall have couches enough soon, — and down to stuff them with, — and purple to cover them, — and pretty women to loll on them, — unless this fool, and such as he, spoil our plans. I had something else to say. The essenced fop wishes to seduce Zoe from me."

"Impossible! You misconstrue the ordinary gallantries which he is in the habit of paying to every handsome face."

"Curse on his ordinary gallantries, and his verses, and his compliments, and his sprigs of myrtle! If Cæsar should dare — By Hercules! I will tear him to pieces in the middle of the Forum."

"Trust his destruction to me. We must use his talents and influence — thrust him upon every danger — make him our instrument while we are contending — our peace offering to the Senate if we fail — our first victim if we succeed."

"Hark! what noise was that?"

"Somebody in the terrace! Lend me your dagger."

Catiline rushed to the window. Zoe was standing in the shade. He stepped out. She darted into the room — passed like a flash of lightning by the startled Cethegus — flew down the stairs — through the court — through the vestibule — through the street. Steps, voices, lights, came fast and confusedly behind her; but with the speed of love and terror she gained upon her pursuers. She fled through the wilderness of unknown and dusky streets, till she found herself, breathless and exhausted, in the midst of a crowd of gallants, who, with chaplets on their heads, and torches in their hands, were reeling from the portico of a stately mansion.

The foremost of the throng was a youth whose slender figure and beautiful countenance seemed hardly consistent with his sex. But the feminine delicacy of his features rendered more frightful the mingled sensuality and ferocity of their expression. The libertine audacity of his stare, and the grotesque foppery of his apparel, seemed to indicate at least a partial insanity. Flinging one arm round Zoe, and tearing away her veil with the other, he disclosed to the gaze of his thronging companions the regular features and large dark eyes which characterize Athenian beauty.

"Clodius has all the luck to-night," cried Ligarius.

"Not so, by Hercules!" said Marcus Cœlius; "the girl is fairly our common prize; we will fling dice for her. The Venus[1] throw, as it ought to do, shall decide."

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[1] Venus was the Roman term for the highest throw on the dice.

"Let me go — let me go, for Heaven's sake!" cried Zoe, struggling with Clodius.

"What a charming Greek accent she has. Come into the house, my little Athenian nightingale."

"Oh! what will become of me? If you have mothers — if you have sisters" —

"Clodius has a sister," muttered Ligarius, "or he is much belied."

"By Heaven! she is weeping," said Clodius.

"If she were not evidently a Greek," said Cœlius, "I should take her for a vestal virgin."

"And if she were a vestal virgin," cried Clodius fiercely, "it should not deter me! This way; no struggling — no screaming."

"Struggling! screaming!" exclaimed a gay and commanding voice; "you are making very ungentle love, Clodius."

The whole party started. Cæsar had mingled with them unperceived.

The sound of his voice thrilled through the very heart of Zoe. With a convulsive effort she burst from the grasp of her insolent admirer, flung herself at the feet of Cæsar, and clasped his knees. The moon shone full on her agitated and imploring face; her lips moved, but she uttered no sound. He gazed at her for an instant — raised her — clasped her to his bosom. "Fear nothing, my sweet Zoe." Then, with folded arms, and a smile of placid defiance, he placed himself between her and Clodius.

Clodius staggered forward, flushed with wine and rage, and uttering alternately a curse and a hiccough.

"By Pollux! this passes a jest. Cæsar, how dare you insult me thus?"

"A jest! I am as serious as a Jew on the Sabbath. Insult you! For such a pair of eyes I would insult the whole consular bench, or I should be as insensible as King Psammis's mummy."

"Good gods! Cæsar," said Marcus Cœlius, interposing, "you cannot think it worth while to get into a brawl for a little Greek girl."

"Why not? The Greek girls have used me as well as those of Rome. Besides, the whole reputation of my gallantry is at stake. Give up such a lovely woman to that drunken boy! My character would be gone forever. No more perfumed tablets, full of vows and raptures. No more toying with fingers at the Circus. No more evening walks along the Tiber. No more hiding in chests, or jumping from windows. I, the favored suitor of half the white stoles in Rome, could never again aspire above a freedwoman. You, a man of gallantry, and think of such a thing! For shame, my dear Cœlius! Do not let Clodia hear of it."

While Cæsar spoke he had been engaged in keeping Clodius at arm's length. The rage of the frantic libertine increased as the struggle continued. "Stand back, as you value your life!" he cried; "I will pass."

"Not this way, sweet Clodius. I have too much regard for you to suffer you to make love at such disadvantage. You smell too much of Falernian at present. Would you stifle your mistress? By Hercules! you are fit to kiss nobody now, except old Piso, when he is tumbling home in the morning from the vintners."[1]

Clodius plunged his hand into his bosom, and drew a little dagger, the faithful companion of many desperate adventures.

"Oh, gods! he will be murdered!" cried Zoe.

The whole throng of revellers was in agitation. The street fluctuated with torches and lifted hands. It was but for a moment. Cæsar watched with a steady eye the descending hand of Clodius, arrested the blow, seized his antagonist by the throat, and flung him against one of the pillars of the portico with such violence that he rolled, stunned and senseless, on the ground.

[1] Cic. in Pis.

"He is killed!" cried several voices.

"Fair self-defence, by Hercules!" said Marcus Cœlius. "Bear witness, you all saw him draw his dagger."

"He is not dead, — he breathes," said Ligarius. "Carry him into the house; he is dreadfully bruised."

The rest of the party retired with Clodius. Cœlius turned to Cæsar.

"By all the gods! Caius, you have won your lady fairly. A splendid victory! You deserve a triumph."

"What a madman Clodius has become!"

"Intolerable. But come and sup with me on the Nones. You have no objection to meet the Consul?"

"Cicero? None at all. We need not talk politics. Our old dispute about Plato and Epicurus will furnish us with plenty of conversation. So reckon upon me, my dear Marcus, and farewell."

Cæsar and Zoe turned away. As soon as they were beyond hearing, she began in great agitation: —

"Cæsar, you are in danger. I know all. I overheard Catiline and Cethegus. You are engaged in a project which must lead to certain destruction."

"My beautiful Zoe, I live only for glory and pleasure. For these I have never hesitated to hazard an existence which they alone render valuable to me. In the present case, I can assure you that our scheme presents the fairest hopes of success."

"So much the worse. You do not know, — you do not understand me. I speak not of open peril, but of secret treachery. Catiline hates you; Cethegus hates you; your destruction is resolved. If you survive the contest, you perish in the first hour of victory. They detest you for your moderation; they are eager for blood and plunder. I have risked my life to bring you this warning; but that is of little moment. Farewell! Be happy" —

Cæsar stopped her. "Do you fly from my thanks, dear Zoe?"

"I wish not for your thanks, but for your safety. I desire not to defraud Valeria or Servilia of one caress, extorted from gratitude or pity. Be my feelings what they may, I have learnt in a fearful school to endure and to suppress them. I have been taught to abase a proud spirit to the claps and hisses of the vulgar; to smile on suitors who united the insults of a despicable pride to the endearments of a loathsome fondness; to affect sprightliness with an aching head, and eyes from which tears were ready to gush; to feign love with curses on my lips, and madness in my brain. Who feels for me any esteem, — any tenderness? Who will shed a tear over the nameless grave which will soon shelter from cruelty and scorn the broken heart of the poor Athenian girl? But you, who alone have addressed her in her degradation with a voice of kindness and respect, farewell. Sometimes think of me, — not with sorrow; — no, I could bear your ingratitude, but not your distress. Yet, if it will not pain you too much, in distant days, when your lofty hopes and destinies are accomplished, — on the evening of some mighty victory, — in the chariot of some magnificent triumph, — think on one who loved you with that exceeding love which only the miserable can feel. Think that, wherever her exhausted frame may have sunk beneath the sensibilities of a tortured spirit, — in whatever hovel or whatever vault she may have closed her eyes, — whatever strange scenes of horror and pollution may have surrounded her dying bed, your shape was the last that swam before her sight, — your voice the last sound that was ringing in her ears. Yet turn your face to me, Cæsar. Let me carry away one last look of those features, and then" — He turned round. He looked at her. He hid his face on her bosom, and burst into tears. With sobs long and loud, and convulsive as those of a terrified child, he poured forth on her bosom the tribute of impetuous and uncontrollable emotion. He raised his head; but he in vain struggled to restore composure to the brow which had confronted the frown of Sylla, and the lips which had rivalled the eloquence of Cicero. He several times attempted to speak, but in vain; and his voice still faltered with tenderness, when, after a pause of several minutes, he thus addressed her: —

"My own dear Zoe, your love has been bestowed on one who, if he cannot merit, can at least appreciate and adore you. Beings of similar loveliness and similar devotedness of affection mingled, in all my boyish dreams of greatness, with visions of curule chairs and ivory cars, marshalled legions and laurelled fasces. Such I have endeavored to find in the world; and in their stead I have met with selfishness, with vanity, with frivolity, with falsehood. The life which you have preserved is a boon less valuable than the affection" —

"Oh, Cæsar," interrupted the blushing Zoe, "think only on your own security at present. If you feel as you speak, — but you are only mocking me, — or perhaps your compassion" —

"By Heaven! — by every oath that is binding" —

"Alas! alas! Cæsar, were not all the same oaths sworn yesterday to Valeria? But I will trust you, at least so far as to partake your present dangers. Flight may be necessary; form your plans. Be they what they may, there is one who, in exile, in poverty, in peril, asks only to wander, to beg, to die with you."

"My Zoe, I do not anticipate any such necessity. To renounce the conspiracy without renouncing the principles on which it was originally undertaken, — to elude the vengeance of the Senate without losing the confidence of the people, — is, indeed, an arduous, but not an impossible task. I owe it to myself and to my country to make the attempt. There is still ample time for consideration. At present I am too happy in love to think of ambition or danger."

They had reached the door of a stately palace. Cæsar struck it. It was instantly opened by a slave. Zoe found herself in a magnificent hall, surrounded by pillars of green marble, between which were ranged the statues of the long line of Julian nobles.

"Call Endymion," said Cæsar.

The confidential freedman made his appearance, not without a slight smile, which his patron's good nature emboldened him to hazard, at perceiving the beautiful Athenian.

"Arm my slaves, Endymion; there are reasons for precaution. Let them relieve each other on guard during the night. Zoe, my love, my preserver, why are your cheeks so pale? Let me kiss some bloom into them. How you tremble! Endymion, a flask of Samian, and some fruit. Bring them to my apartments. This way, my sweet Zoe."

. . . .

ON THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE

Knight's Quarterly Magazine, June, 1823

THIS is the age of societies. There is scarcely one Englishman in ten who has not belonged to some association for distributing books, or for prosecuting them; for sending invalids to the hospital, or beggars to the treadmill; for giving plate to the rich, or blankets to the poor. To be the most absurd institution among so many institutions is no small distinction; it seems, however, to belong indisputably to the Royal Society of Literature. At the first establishment of that ridiculous academy, every sensible man predicted that, in spite of regal patronage and episcopal management, it would do nothing, or do harm. And it will scarcely be denied that those expectations have hitherto been fulfilled.

I do not attack the founders of the association. Their characters are respectable; their motives, I am willing to believe, were laudable. But I feel, and it is the duty of every literary man to feel, a strong jealousy of their proceedings. Their society can be innocent only while it continues to be despicable. Should they ever possess the power to encourage merit, they must also possess the power to depress it. Which power will be more frequently exercised, let every one who has studied literary history, let every one who has studied human nature, declare.

Envy and faction insinuate themselves into all communities. They often disturb the peace, and pervert the decisions, of benevolent and scientific associations. But it is in literary academies that they exert the most extensive and pernicious influence. In the first place, the principles of literary criticism, though equally fixed with those on which the chemist and the surgeon proceed, are by no means equally recognized. Men are rarely able to assign a reason for their approbation or dislike on questions of taste; and therefore they willingly submit to any guide who boldly asserts his claim to superior discernment. It is more difficult to ascertain and establish the merits of a poem than the powers of a machine or the benefits of a new remedy. Hence it is in literature, that quackery is most easily puffed, and excellence most easily decried.

In some degree this argument applies to academies of the fine arts; and it is fully confirmed by all that I have ever heard of that institution which annually disfigures the walls of Somerset House with an acre of spoiled canvas. But a literary tribunal is incomparably more dangerous. Other societies, at least, have no tendency to call forth any opinions on those subjects which most agitate and inflame the minds of men. The skeptic and the zealot, the revolutionist and placeman, meet on common ground in a gallery of paintings or a laboratory of science. They can praise or censure without reference to the differences which exist between them. In a literary body this can never be the case. Literature is, and always must be, inseparably blended with politics and theology; it is the great engine which moves the feelings of a people on the most momentous questions. It is, therefore, impossible that any society can be formed so impartial as to consider the literary character of an individual abstracted from the opinions which his writings inculcate. It is not to be hoped, perhaps it is not to be wished, that the feelings of the man should be so completely forgotten in the duties of the academician. The consequences are evident. The honors and censures of this Star Chamber of the Muses will be awarded according to the prejudices of the particular sect or faction which may at the time predominate. Whigs would canvass against a Southey, Tories against a Byron. Those who might at first protest against such conduct as unjust would soon adopt it on the plea of retaliation; and the general good of literature, for which the society was professedly instituted, would be forgotten in the stronger claims of political and religious partiality.

Yet even this is not the worst. Should the institution ever acquire any influence, it will afford most pernicious facilities to every malignant coward who may desire to blast a reputation which he envies. It will furnish a secure ambuscade, behind which the Maroons of literature may take a certain and deadly aim. The editorial *we* has often been fatal to rising genius; though all the world knows that it is only a form of speech, very often employed by a single needy blockhead. The academic *we* would have a far greater and more ruinous influence. Numbers, while they increased the effect, would diminish the shame, of injustice. The advantages of an open and those of an anonymous attack would be combined; and the authority of avowal would be united to the security of concealment. The serpents in Virgil, after they had destroyed Laocoön, found an asylum from the vengeance of the enraged people behind the shield of the statue of Minerva. And in the same manner, everything that is grovelling and venomous, everything that can hiss, and everything that can sting, would take sanctuary in the recesses of this new temple of wisdom.

The French Academy was, of all such associations, the most widely and the most justly celebrated. It was founded by the greatest of ministers; it was patronized by successive kings; it numbered in its lists most of the eminent French writers. Yet what benefit has literature derived from its labors? What is its history but an uninterrupted record of servile compliances — of paltry artifices — of deadly quarrels — of perfidious friendships? whether governed by the Court, by the Sorbonne, or by the Philosophers, it was always equally powerful for evil, and equally impotent for good. I might speak of the attacks by which it attempted to depress the rising fame of Corneille; I might speak of the reluctance with which it gave its tardy confirmation to the applauses which the whole civilized world had bestowed on the genius of Voltaire. I might prove by overwhelming evidence that, to the latest period of its existence, even under the superintendence of the all-accomplished D'Alembert, it continued to be a scene of the fiercest animosities and the basest intrigues. I might cite Piron's epigrams, and Marmontel's memoirs, and Montesquieu's letters. But I hasten on to another topic.

One of the modes by which our Society proposes to encourage merit is the distribution of prizes. The munificence of the King has enabled it to offer an annual premium of a hundred guineas for the best essay in prose, and another of fifty guineas for the best poem, which may be transmitted to it. This is very laughable. In the first place the judges may err. Those imperfections of human intellect to which, as the articles of the Church tell us, even general councils are subject, may possibly be found even in the Royal Society of Literature. The French Academy, as I have already said, was the most illustrious assembly of the kind, and numbered among its associates men much more distinguished than ever will assemble at Mr. Hatchard's to rummage the box of the English Society. Yet this famous body gave a poetical prize, for which Voltaire was a candidate, to a fellow who wrote some verses about *the frozen and the burning pole.*

Yet, granting that the prizes were always awarded to the best composition, that composition, I say without hesitation, will always be bad. A prize poem is like a prize sheep. The object of the competitor for the agricultural premium is to produce an animal fit, not to be eaten, but to be weighed. Accordingly he pampers his victim into morbid and unnatural fatness; and, when it is in such a state that it would be sent away in disgust from any table, he offers it to the judges. The object of the poetical can didate, in like manner, is to produce, not a good poem, but a poem of that exact degree of frigidity or bombast which may appear to his censors to be correct or sublime. Compositions thus constructed will always be worthless. The few excellences which they may contain will have an exotic aspect and flavor. In general, prize sheep are good for nothing but to make tallow candles, and prize poems are good for nothing but to light them.

The first subject proposed by the Society to the poets of England was Dartmoor. I thought that they intended a covert sarcasm at their own projects. Their institution was a literary Dartmoor scheme, — a plan for forcing into cultivation the waste lands of intellect; for raising poetical produce, by means of bounties, from soil too meagre to have yielded any returns in the natural course of things. The plan for the cultivation of Dartmoor has, I hear, been abandoned. I hope that this may be an omen of the fate of the Society.

In truth, this seems by no means improbable. They have been offering for several years the rewards which the King placed at their disposal, and have not, as far as I can learn, been able to find in their box one composition which they have deemed worthy of publication. At least no publication has taken place. The associates may perhaps be astonished at this. But I will attempt to explain it, after the manner of ancient times, by means of an apologue.

About four hundred years after the Deluge, King Gomer Chephoraod reigned in Babylon. He united all the characteristics of an excellent sovereign. He made good laws, won great battles, and whitewashed long streets. He was, in consequence, idolized by his people, and panegyrized by many poets and orators. A book was then a serious undertaking. Neither paper nor any similar material had been invented. Authors were therefore under the necessity of inscribing their compositions on massive bricks. Some of these Babylonian records are still preserved in European museums; but the language in which they are written has never been deciphered. Gomer Chephoraod was so popular that the clay of all the plains round the Euphrates could scarcely furnish brick-kilns enough for his eulogists. It is recorded in particular that Pharonezzar, the Assyrian Pindar, published a bridge and four walls in his praise.

One day the king was going in state from his palace to the temple of Belus. During this procession it was lawful for any Babylonian to offer any petition or suggestion to his sovereign. As the chariot passed before a vintner's shop, a large company, apparently half drunk, sallied forth into the street; and one of them thus addressed the king:

"Gomer Chephoraod, live forever! It appears to thy servants that of all the productions of the earth good wine is the best, and bad wine is the worst. Good wine makes the heart cheerful, the eyes bright, the speech ready. Bad wine confuses the head, disorders the stomach, makes us quarrelsome at night, and sick the next morning. Now therefore let my lord the king take order that thy servants may drink good wine."

"And how is this to be done?" said the good-natured prince.

"Oh king," said his monitor, "this is most easy. Let the king make a decree, and seal it with his royal signet: and let it be proclaimed that the king will give ten she-asses, and ten slaves, and ten changes of raiment, every year, unto the man who shall make ten measures of the best wine. And whosoever wishes for the she-asses, and the slaves, and the raiment, let him send the ten measures of wine to thy servants, and we will drink thereof and judge. So shall there be much good wine in Assyria."

The project pleased Gomer Chephoraod. "Be it so," said he. The people shouted. The petitioners prostrated themselves in gratitude. The same night heralds were dispatched to bear the intelligence to the remotest districts of Assyria.

After a due interval the wines began to come in; and the examiners assembled to adjudge the prize. The first vessel was unsealed. Its odor was such that the judges, without tasting it, pronounced unanimous condemnation. The next was opened: it had a villainous taste of clay. The third was sour and vapid. They proceeded from one cask of execrable liquor to another, till at length, in absolute nausea, they gave up the investigation.

The next morning they all assembled at the gate of the king, with pale faces and aching heads. They owned that they could not recommend any competitor as worthy of the rewards. They swore that the wine was little better than poison, and entreated permission to resign the office of deciding between such detestable potions.

"In the name of Belus, how can this have happened?" said the king.

Merolchazzar, the high priest, muttered something about the anger of the gods at the toleration shown to a sect of impious heretics who ate pigeons broiled, "whereas," said he, "our religion commands us to eat them roasted. Now therefore, oh king," continued this respectable divine, "give command to thy men of war, and let them smite the disobedient people with the sword, them, and their wives, and their children, and let their houses, and their flocks, and their herds, be given to thy servants the priests. Then shall the land yield its increase, and the fruits of the earth shall be no more blasted by the vengeance of Heaven."

"Nay," said the king, "the ground lies under no general curse from Heaven. The season has been singularly good. The wine which thou didst thyself drink at the banquet a few nights ago, oh venerable Merolchazzar, was of this year's vintage. Dost thou not remember how thou didst praise it? It was the same night that thou wast inspired by Belus, and didst reel to and fro, and discourse sacred mysteries. These things are too hard for me. I comprehend them not. The only wine which is bad is that which is sent to my judges. Who can expound this to us?"

The king scratched his head. Upon which all the courtiers scratched their heads.

He then ordered proclamation to be made, that a purple robe and a golden chain should be given to the man who could solve this difficulty.

An old philosopher, who had been observed to smile rather disdainfully when the prize had first been instituted, came forward and spoke thus: —

"Gomer Chephoraod, live forever! Marvel not at that which has happened. It was no miracle, but a natural event. How could it be otherwise? It is true that much good wine has been made this year. But who would send it in for thy rewards? Thou knowest Ascobaruch, who hath the great vineyards in the north, and Cohahiroth, who sendeth wine every year from the south over the Persian Gulf. Their wines are so delicious that ten measures thereof are sold for an hundred talents of silver. Thinkest thou that they will exchange them for thy slaves and thine asses? What would thy prize profit any who have vineyards in rich soils?"

"Who then," said one of the judges, "are the wretches who sent us this poison?"

"Blame them not," said the sage, "seeing that you have been the authors of the evil. They are men whose lands are poor, and have never yielded them any returns equal to the prizes which the king proposed. Wherefore, knowing that the lords of the fruitful vineyards would not enter into competition with them, they planted vines, some on rocks, and some in light sandy soil, and some in deep clay. Hence their wines are bad. For no culture or reward will make barren land bear good vines. Know, therefore, assuredly, that your prizes have increased the quantity of bad but not of good wine."

There was a long silence. At length the king spoke. "Give him the purple robe and the chain of gold. Throw the wines into the Euphrates; and proclaim that the Royal Society of Wines is dissolved."

SCENES FROM ATHENIAN REVELS

A DRAMA

Knight's Quarterly Magazine, January, 1824

I

SCENE. — *A Street in Athens.*

Enter CALLIDEMUS *and* SPEUSIPPUS.

CALLIDEMUS.

So, you young reprobate! You must be a man of wit, forsooth, and a man of quality! You must spend as if you were as rich as Nicias, and prate as if you were as wise as Pericles! You must dangle after sophists and pretty women! And I must pay for all! I must sup on thyme and onions, while you are swallowing thrushes and hares! I must drink water, that you may play the cottabus[1] with Chian wine. I must wander about as ragged as Pauson,[2] that you may be as fine as Alcibiades! I must lie on bare boards, with a stone[3] for my pillow, and a rotten mat for my coverlid, by the light of a wretched winking lamp, while you are marching in state, with as many torches as one sees at the feast of Ceres, to thunder with your hatchet[4] at the doors of half the Ionian ladies in Peiræus.[5]

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[1] This game consisted in projecting wine out of cups; it was a diversion extremely fashionable at Athenian entertainments.

[2] Pauson was an Athenian painter, whose name was synonymous with beggary. See Aristophanes, Plutus, 602. From his poverty, I am inclined to suppose that he painted historical pictures.

[3] See Aristophanes, Plutus, 542.

[4] See Theocritus, Idyll, ii. 128.

[5] This was the most disreputable part of Athens. See Aristophanes, Pax, 165.

SPEUSIPPUS.

Why, thou unreasonable old man! Thou most shameless of fathers —

CALLIDEMUS.

Ungrateful wretch; dare you talk so? Are you not afraid of the thunders of Jupiter?

SPEUSIPPUS.

Jupiter thunder! nonsense! Anaxagoras says, that thunder is only an explosion produced by —

CALLIDEMUS.

He does! Would that it had fallen on his head for his pains!

SPEUSIPPUS.

Nay: talk rationally.

CALLIDEMUS.

Rationally! You audacious young sophist! I will talk rationally. Do you know that I am your father? What quibble can you make upon that?

SPEUSIPPUS.

Do I know that you are my father? Let us take the question to pieces, as Melesigenes would say. First, then, we must inquire what is knowledge? Secondly, what is a father? Now, knowledge, as Socrates said the other day to Theætetus[1] —

CALLIDEMUS.

Socrates! what! the ragged flat-nosed old dotard, who walks about all day barefoot, and filches cloaks, and dissects gnats, and shoes[2] fleas with wax?

SPEUSIPPUS.

All fiction! All trumped up by Aristophanes!

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[1] See Plato's Theætetus.

[2] See Aristophanes, Nubes, 150.

CALLIDEMUS.

By Pallas! if he is in the habit of putting shoes on his fleas, he is kinder to them than to himself. But listen to me, boy; if you go on in this way, you will be ruined. There is an argument for you. Go to your Socrates and your Melesigenes, and tell them to refute that. Ruined! Do you hear?

SPEUSIPPUS.

Ruined!

CALLIDEMUS.

Aye, by Jupiter! Is such a show as you make to be supported on nothing? During all the last war, I made not an obol from my farm; the Peloponnesian locusts came almost as regularly as the Pleiades: corn burnt; olives stripped; fruit trees cut down; wells stopped up; and, just when peace came, and I hoped that all would turn out well, you must begin to spend as if you had all the mines of Thasus at command.

SPEUSIPPUS.

Now, by Neptune, who delights in horses —

CALLIDEMUS.

If Neptune delights in horses, he does not resemble me. You must ride at the Panathenæa on a horse fit for the great king: four acres of my best vines went for that folly. You must retrench, or you will have nothing to eat. Does not Anaxagoras mention, among his other discoveries, that when a man has nothing to eat he dies?

SPEUSIPPUS.

You are deceived. My friends —

CALLIDEMUS.

Oh, yes! your friends will notice you, doubtless, when you are squeezing through the crowd, on a winter's day, to warm yourself at the fire of the baths; or when you are fighting with beggars and beggars' dogs for the scraps of a sacrifice; or when you are glad to earn three wretched obols [1] by listening all day to lying speeches and crying children.

SPEUSIPPUS.

There are other means of support.

CALLIDEMUS.

What! I suppose you will wander from house to house, like that wretched buffoon Philippus,[2] and beg everybody who has asked a supper party to be so kind as to feed you and laugh at you; or you will turn sycophant, you will get a bunch of grapes, or a pair of shoes, now and then, by frightening some rich coward with a mock prosecution. Well! that is a task for which your studies under the sophists may have fitted you.

SPEUSIPPUS.

You are wide of the mark.

CALLIDEMUS.

Then what, in the name of Juno, is your scheme? Do you intend to join Orestes,[3] and rob on the highway? Take care; beware of the eleven; [4] beware of the hemlock. It may be very pleasant to live at other people's expense; but not very pleasant, I should think, to hear the pestle give its last bang against the mortar, when the cold dose is ready. Pah! —

SPEUSIPPUS.

Hemlock! Orestes! folly! — I aim at nobler objects. What say you to politics, — the general assembly?

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[1] The stipend of an Athenian juryman.

[2] Xenophon, Convivium.

[3] A celebrated highwayman of Attica. See Aristophanes, Aves, 711; and in several other passages.

[4] The police officers of Athens.

CALLIDEMUS.

You an orator! — Oh no! no! Celon was worth twenty such fools as you. You have succeeded, I grant, to his impudence, for which, if there be justice in Tartarus, he is now soaking up to the eyes in his own tan-pickle. But the Paphlagonian had parts.

SPEUSIPPUS.

And you mean to imply —

CALLIDEMUS.

Not I. You are a Pericles in embryo, doubtless. Well, and when are you to make your first speech? O Pallas!

SPEUSIPPUS.

I thought of speaking, the other day, on the Sicilian expedition; but Nicias[1] got up before me.

CALLIDEMUS.

Nicias, poor honest man, might just as well have sat still; his speaking did but little good. The loss of your oration is, doubtless, an irreparable public calamity.

SPEUSIPPUS.

Why, not so; I intend to introduce it at the next assembly; it will suit any subject.

CALLIDEMUS.

That is to say, it will suit none. But pray, if it be not too presumptuous a request, indulge me with a specimen.

SPEUSIPPUS.

Well, suppose the agora crowded; — an important subject under discussion; an ambassador from Argos, or from the great king; the tributes from the islands; an impeachment; — in short, anything you please. The crier makes proclamation. "Any citizen above fifty years old may speak — any citizen not disqualified may speak." Then I rise; a great murmur of curiosity while I am mounting the stand.

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[1] See Thucydides, vi. 8.

CALLIDEMUS.

Of curiosity! yes, and of something else, too. You will infallibly be dragged down by main force, like poor Glaucon[1] last year.

SPEUSIPPUS.

Never fear. I shall begin in this style: —

"When I consider, Athenians, the importance of our city; when I consider the extent of its power, the wisdom of its laws, the elegance of its decorations; when I consider by what names and by what exploits its annals are adorned; when I think on Harmodius and Aristogiton, on Themistocles and Miltiades, on Cimon and Pericles; when I contemplate our preëminence in arts and letters; when I observe so many flourishing states and islands compelled to own the dominion, and purchase the protection, of the City of the Violet Crown"[2] —

CALLIDEMUS.

I shall choke with rage. Oh, all ye gods and goddesses, what sacrilege, what perjury have I ever committed, that I should be singled out from among all the citizens of Athens to be the father of this fool?

SPEUSIPPUS.

What now? By Bacchus! old man, I would not advise you to give way to such fits of passion in the streets. If Aristophanes were to see you, you would infallibly be in a comedy next spring.

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[1] See Xenophon, Memorabilia, iii.

[2] A favorite epithet of Athens. See Aristophanes, Acharn. 637.

CALLIDEMUS.

You have more reason to fear Aristophanes than any fool living. Oh, that he could but hear you trying to imitate the slang of Straton[1] and the lisp of Alcibiades![2] You would be an inexhaustible subject. You would console him for the loss of Cleon.

SPEUSIPPUS.

No, no. I may perhaps figure at the dramatic representations before long; but in a very different way.

CALLIDEMUS.

What do you mean?

SPEUSIPPUS.

What say you to a tragedy?

CALLIDEMUS.

A tragedy of yours?

SPEUSIPPUS.

Even so.

CALLIDEMUS.

O Hercules! O Bacchus! This is too much. Here is a universal genius; sophist, — orator, — poet. To what a three-headed monster have I given birth! a perfect Cerberus of intellect! And pray what may your piece be about? Or will your tragedy, like your speech, serve equally for any subject?

SPEUSIPPUS.

I thought of several plots; Œdipus, Eteocles and Polynices, the war of Troy, the murder of Agamemnon.

CALLIDEMUS.

And what have you chosen?

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[1] See Aristophanes, Equites, 1375.

[2] See Aristophanes, Vespæ, 44.

SPEUSIPPUS.

You know there is a law which permits any modern poet to retouch a play of Æschylus, and bring it forward as his own composition. And, as there is an absurd prejudice, among the vulgar, in favor of his extravagant pieces, I have selected one of them, and altered it.

CALLIDEMUS.

Which of them?

SPEUSIPPUS.

Oh! that mass of barbarous absurdities, the Prometheus. But I have framed it anew upon the model of Euripides. By Bacchus! I shall make Sophocles and Agathon look about them. You would not know the play again.

CALLIDEMUS.

By Jupiter! I believe not.

SPEUSIPPUS.

I have omitted the whole of the absurd dialogue between Vulcan and Strength, at the beginning.

CALLIDEMUS.

That may be, on the whole, an improvement. The play will then open with that grand soliloquy of Prometheus, when he is chained to the rock.

"Oh! ye eternal heavens! Ye rushing winds!
Ye fountains of great streams! Ye ocean waves,
That in ten thousand sparkling dimples wreathe
Your azure smiles! All-generating earth!
All-seeing sun! On you, on you, I call."[1]

Well, I allow that will be striking; I did not think you capable of that idea. Why do you laugh?

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[1] See Æschylus, Prometheus, 88.

SPEUSIPPUS.

Do you seriously suppose that one who has studied the plays of that great man, Euripides, would ever begin a tragedy in such a ranting style?

CALLIDEMUS.

What, does not your play open with the speech of Prometheus?

SPEUSIPPUS.

No doubt.

CALLIDEMUS.

Then what, in the name of Bacchus, do you make him say?

SPEUSIPPUS.

You shall hear; and, if it be not in the very style of Euripides, call me a fool.

CALLIDEMUS.

That is a liberty which I shall venture to take, whether it be or no. But go on.

SPEUSIPPUS.

Prometheus begins thus: —

"Cœlus begat Saturn and Briareus,
Cottus and Creius and Iapetus,
Gyges and Hyperion, Phœbe, Tethys,
Thea and Rhea and Mnemosyne.
Then Saturn wedded Rhea, and begat
Pluto and Neptune, Jupiter and Juno."

CALLIDEMUS.

Very beautiful, and very natural; and, as you say, very like Euripides.

SPEUSIPPUS.

You are sneering. Really, father, you do not understand these things. You had not those advantages in your youth —

CALLIDEMUS.

Which I have been fool enough to let you have. No; in my early days, lying had not been dignified into a science, nor politics degraded into a trade. I wrestled, and read Homer's battles, instead of dressing my hair, and reciting lectures in verse out of Euripides. But I have some notion of what a play should be; I have seen Phrynichus, and lived with Æschylus. I saw the representation of the Persians.

SPEUSIPPUS.

A wretched play; it may amuse the fools who row the triremes; but it is utterly unworthy to be read by any man of taste.

CALLIDEMUS.

If you had seen it acted! — the whole theatre frantic with joy, stamping, shouting, laughing, crying. There was Cynægeirus, the brother of Æschylus, who lost both his arms at Marathon, beating the stumps against his sides with rapture. When the crowd remarked him — but where are you going?

SPEUSIPPUS.

To sup with Alcibiades; he sails with the expedition for Sicily in a few days; this is his farewell entertainment.

CALLIDEMUS.

So much the better; I should say, so much the worse. That cursed Sicilian expedition! And you were one of the young fools[1] who stood clapping and shouting while he was gulling the rabble, and who drowned poor Nicias's voice with your uproar. Look to it; a day of reckoning will come. As to Alcibiades himself —

SPEUSIPPUS.

What can you say against him? His enemies themselves acknowledge his merit.

[1] See Thucydides, vi. 13.

CALLIDEMUS.

They acknowledge that he is clever, and handsome, and that he was crowned at the Olympic games. And what other merits do his friends claim for him? A precious assembly you will meet at his house, no doubt.

SPEUSIPPUS.

The first men in Athens, probably.

CALLIDEMUS.

Whom do you mean by the first men in Athens?

SPEUSIPPUS.

Callicles.[1]

CALLIDEMUS.

A sacrilegious, impious, unfeeling ruffian!

SPEUSIPPUS.

Hippomachus.

CALLIDEMUS.

A fool, who can talk of nothing but his travels through Persia and Egypt. Go, go. The gods forbid that I should detain you from such choice society.

[*Exeunt severally.*

II

SCENE. — *A Hall in the House of* ALCIBIADES.

ALCIBIADES, SPEUSIPPUS, CALLICLES, HIPPOMACHUS, CHARICLEA, *and others, seated round a table, feasting.*

ALCIBIADES.

Bring larger cups. This shall be our gayest revel. It is probably the last — for some of us at least.

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[1] Callicles plays a conspicuous part in the Gorgias of Plato.

SPEUSIPPUS.

At all events, it will be long before you taste such wine again, Alcibiades.

CALLICLES.

Nay, there is excellent wine in Sicily. When I was there with Eurymedon's squadron, I had many a long carouse. You never saw finer grapes than those of Ætna.

HIPPOMACHUS.

The Greeks do not understand the art of making wine. Your Persian is the man. So rich, so fragrant, so sparkling. I will tell you what the Satrap of Caria said to me about that when I supped with him.

ALCIBIADES.

Nay, sweet Hippomachus; not a word to-night about satraps, or the great king, or the walls of Babylon, or the Pyramids, or the mummies. Chariclea, why do you look so sad?

CHARICLEA.

Can I be cheerful when you are going to leave me, Alcibiades?

ALCIBIADES.

My life, my sweet soul, it is but for a short time. In a year we conquer Sicily. In another, we humble Carthage.[1] I will bring back such robes, such necklaces, elephants' teeth by thousands, aye, and the elephants themselves, if you wish to see them. Nay, smile, my Chariclea, or I shall talk nonsense to no purpose.

HIPPOMACHUS.

The largest elephant that I ever saw was in the grounds of Teribazus, near Susa. I wish that I had measured him.

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[1] See Thucydides, vi. 90.

ALCIBIADES.

I wish that he had trod upon you. Come, come, Chariclea, we shall soon return, and then —

CHARICLEA.

Yes; then, indeed.

ALCIBIADES.

Yes, then —

Then for revels; then for dances,
Tender whispers, melting glances.
Peasants, pluck your richest fruits;
Minstrels, sound your sweetest flutes;
Come in laughing crowds to greet us,
Dark-eyed daughters of Miletus;
Bring the myrtles, bring the dice,
Floods of Chian, hills of spice.

SPEUSIPPUS.

Whose lines are those, Alcibiades?

ALCIBIADES.

My own. Think you, because I do not shut myself up to meditate, and drink water, and eat herbs, that I cannot write verses? By Apollo! if I did not spend my days in politics, and my nights in revelry, I should have made Sophocles tremble. But now I never go beyond a little song like this, and never invoke any Muse but Chariclea. But come, Speusippus, sing. You are a professed poet. Let us have some of your verses.

SPEUSIPPUS.

My verses! How can you talk so? I a professed poet!

ALCIBIADES.

Oh, content you, sweet Speusippus. We all know your designs upon the tragic honors. Come, sing. A chorus of your new play.

SPEUSIPPUS.

Nay, nay —

HIPPOMACHUS.

When a guest who is asked to sing at a Persian banquet refuses —

SPEUSIPPUS.

In the name of Bacchus —

ALCIBIADES.

I am absolute. Sing.

SPEUSIPPUS.

Well, then, I will sing you a chorus, which, I think, is a tolerable imitation of Euripides.

CHARICLEA.

Of Euripides? — Not a word!

ALCIBIADES.

Why so, sweet Chariclea?

CHARICLEA.

Would you have me betray my sex? Would you have me forget his Phædras and Sthenobœas? No; if I ever suffer any lines of that woman-hater, or his imitators, to be sung in my presence, may I sell herbs like his mother,[1] and wear rags like his Telephus.[2]

ALCIBIADES.

Then, sweet Chariclea, since you have silenced Speusippus, you shall sing yourself.

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[1] The mother of Euripides was a herb-woman. This was a favorite topic of Aristophanes.

[2] The hero of one of the lost plays of Euripides, who appears to have been brought upon the stage in the garb of a beggar. See Aristophanes, Acharn. 430; and in other places.

CHARICLEA.

What shall I sing?

ALCIBIADES.

Nay, choose for yourself.

CHARICLEA.

Then I will sing an old Ionian hymn, which is chanted every spring at the feast of Venus, near Miletus. I used to sing it in my own country when I was a child; and — Ah, Alcibiades!

ALCIBIADES.

Dear Chariclea, you shall sing something else. This distresses you.

CHARICLEA.

No; hand me the lyre, — no matter. You will hear the song to disadvantage. But if it were sung as I have heard it sung, — if this were a beautiful morning in spring, and if we were standing on a woody promontory, with the sea, and the white sails, and the blue Cyclades beneath us, and the portico of a temple peeping through the trees on a huge peak above our heads, and thousands of people, with myrtles in their hands, thronging up the winding path, their gay dresses and garlands disappearing and emerging by turns as they passed round the angles of the rock, — then perhaps —

ALCIBIADES.

Now, by Venus herself, sweet lady, where you are we shall lack neither sun, nor flowers, nor spring, nor temple, nor goddess.

CHARICLEA. (*Sings.*)

Let this sunny hour be given,
  Venus, unto love and mirth:
Smiles like thine are in the heaven;
  Bloom like thine is on the earth;

And the tinkling of the fountains,
  And the murmurs of the sea,
And the echoes from the mountains,
  Speak of youth, and hope, and thee.

By whate'er of soft expression
  Thou hast taught to lovers' eyes,
Faint denial, slow confession,
  Glowing cheeks and stifled sighs;
By the pleasure and the pain,
  By the follies and the wiles,
Pouting fondness, sweet disdain,
  Happy tears and mournful smiles;

Come with music floating o'er thee;
  Come with violets springing round:
Let the Graces dance before thee,
  All their golden zones unbound;
Now in sport their faces hiding,
  Now, with slender fingers fair,
From their laughing eyes dividing
  The long curls of rose-crowned hair.

ALCIBIADES.

Sweetly sung, but mournfully, Chariclea; for which I would chide you, but that I am sad myself. More wine there. I wish to all the gods that I had fairly sailed from Athens.

CHARICLEA.

And from me, Alcibiades?

ALCIBIADES.

Yes, from you, dear lady. The days which immediately precede separation are the most melancholy of our lives.

CHARICLEA.

Except those which immediately follow it.

ALCIBIADES.

No; when I cease to see you, other objects may compel my attention; but can I be near you without thinking how lovely you are, and how soon I must leave you?

HIPPOMACHUS.

Aye; travelling soon puts such thoughts out of men's heads.

CALLICLES.

A battle is the best remedy for them.

CHARICLEA.

A battle, I should think, might supply their place with others as unpleasant.

CALLICLES.

No. The preparations are rather disagreeable to a novice. But as soon as the fighting begins, by Jupiter! it is a noble time, — men trampling, — shields clashing, — spears breaking, — and the pæan roaring louder than all.

CHARICLEA.

But what if you are killed?

CALLICLES.

What indeed? You must ask Speusippus that question. He is a philosopher.

ALCIBIADES.

Yes, and the greatest of philosophers, if he can answer it.

SPEUSIPPUS.

Pythagoras is of opinion —

HIPPOMACHUS.

Pythagoras stole that and all his other opinions from Asia and Egypt. The transmigration of the soul and the vegetable diet are derived from India. I met a Brachman in Sogdiana —

CALLICLES.

All nonsense!

CHARICLEA.

What think you, Alcibiades?

ALCIBIADES.

I think that, if the doctrine be true, your spirit will be transfused into one of the doves who carry[1] ambrosia to the gods or verses to the mistresses of poets. Do you remember Anacreon's lines? How should you like such an office?

CHARICLEA.

If I were to be your dove, Alcibiades, and you would treat me as Anacreon treated his, and let me nestle in your breast and drink from your cup, I would submit even to carry your love-letters to other ladies.

CALLICLES.

What, in the name of Jupiter, is the use of all these speculations about death? Socrates once[2] lectured me upon it the best part of a day. I have hated the sight of him ever since. Such things may suit an old sophist when he is fasting; but in the midst of wine and music —

HIPPOMACHUS.

I differ from you. The enlightened Egyptians bring skeletons into their banquets, in order to remind their guests to make the most of their life while they have it.

CALLICLES.

I want neither skeleton nor sophist to teach me that lesson. More wine, I pray you, and less wisdom. If you must believe something which you never can know, why not be contented with the long stories about the other world which are told us when we are initiated at the Eleusinian Mysteries![1]

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[1] Homer's Odyssey, xii. 63.

[2] See the close of Plato's Gorgias.

CHARICLEA.

And what are those stories?

ALCIBIADES.

Are not you initiated, Chariclea?

CHARICLEA.

No; my mother was a Lydian, a barbarian; and therefore —

ALCIBIADES.

I understand. Now the curse of Venus on the fools who made so hateful a law. Speusippus, does not your friend Euripides[2] say —

> "The land where thou art prosperous is thy country"?

Surely we ought to say to every lady, —

> "The land where thou art pretty is thy country."

Besides, to exclude foreign beauties from the chorus of the initiated in the Elysian fields is less cruel to them than to ourselves. Chariclea, you shall be initiated.

CHARICLEA.

When?

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[1] The scene which follows is founded upon history. Thucydides tells us, in his sixth book, that about this time Alcibiades was suspected of having assisted at a mock celebration of these famous mysteries. It was the opinion of the vulgar among the Athenians that extraordinary privileges were granted in the other world to all who had been initiated.

[2] The right of Euripides to this line is somewhat disputable. See Aristophanes, Plutus, 1152.

ALCIBIADES.

Now.

CHARICLEA.

Where?

ALCIBIADES.

Here.

CHARICLEA.

Delightful!

SPEUSIPPUS.

But there must be an interval of a year between the purification and the initiation.

ALCIBIADES.

We will suppose all that.

SPEUSIPPUS.

And nine days of rigid mortification of the senses.

ALCIBIADES.

We will suppose that too. I am sure it was supposed, with as little reason, when I was initiated.

SPEUSIPPUS.

But you are sworn to secrecy.

ALCIBIADES.

You a sophist, and talk of oaths! You a pupil of Euripides, and forget his maxims!

> "My lips have sworn it; but my mind is free."[1]

SPEUSIPPUS.

But, Alcibiades —

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[1] See Euripides, Hippolytus, 608. For the Jesuitical morality of this line Euripides is bitterly attacked by the comic poet.

ALCIBIADES.

What! Are you afraid of Ceres and Proserpine?

SPEUSIPPUS.

No — but — but — I — that is, I — but it is best to be safe — I mean — suppose there should be something in it.

ALCIBIADES.

Now, by Mercury! I shall die with laughing. O Speusippus, Speusippus! Go back to your old father. Dig vineyards, and judge causes, and be a respectable citizen. But never, while you live, again dream of being a philosopher.

SPEUSIPPUS.

Nay, I was only —

ALCIBIADES.

A pupil of Gorgias and Melesigenes afraid of Tartarus! In what region of the infernal world do you expect your domicile to be fixed? Shall you roll a stone like Sisyphus? Hard exercise, Speusippus!

SPEUSIPPUS.

In the name of all the gods —

ALCIBIADES.

Or shall you sit starved and thirsty in the midst of fruit and wine like Tantalus? Poor fellow! I think I see your face as you are springing up to the branches and missing your aim. O Bacchus! O Mercury!

SPEUSIPPUS.

Alcibiades!

ALCIBIADES.

Or perhaps you will be food for a vulture, like the huge fellow who was rude to Latona.

SPEUSIPPUS.

Alcibiades!

ALCIBIADES.

Never fear. Minos will not be so cruel. Your eloquence will triumph over all accusations. The Furies will skulk away like disappointed sycophants. Only address the judges of hell in the speech which you were prevented from speaking last assembly. "When I consider" — is not that the beginning of it? Come, man, do not be angry. Why do you pace up and down with such long steps? You are not in Tartarus yet. You seem to think that you are already stalking like poor Achilles, —

"With stride
Majestic through the plain of Asphodel."[1]

SPEUSIPPUS.

How can you talk so, when you know that I believe all that foolery as little as you do?

ALCIBIADES.

Then march. You shall be the crier.[2] Callicles, you shall carry the torch. Why do you stare?

CALLICLES.

I do not much like the frolic.

ALCIBIADES.

Nay, surely you are not taken with a fit of piety. If all be true that is told of you, you have as little reason to think the gods vindictive as any man breathing. If you be not belied, a certain golden goblet which I have seen at your house was once in the temple of Juno at Corcyra. And men say that there was a priestess at Tarentum —

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[1] See Homer's Odyssey, xi. 538.

[2] The crier and torch-bearer were important functionaries at the celebration of the Eleusinian Mysteries.

CALLICLES.

A fig for the gods! I was thinking about the Archons. You will have an accusation laid against you to-morrow. It is not very pleasant to be tried before the king.[1]

ALCIBIADES.

Never fear: there is not a sycophant in Attica who would dare to breathe a word against me, for the golden plane-tree of the great king.[2]

HIPPOMACHUS.

That plane-tree —

ALCIBIADES.

Never mind the plane-tree. Come, Callicles, you were not so timid when you plundered the merchantman off Cape Malea. Take up the torch and move. Hippomachus, tell one of the slaves to bring a sow.[3]

CALLICLES.

And what part are you to play?

ALCIBIADES.

I shall be hierophant. Herald, to your office. Torch-bearer, advance with the lights. Come forward, fair novice. We will celebrate the rite within.

[*Exeunt.*

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[1] The name of king was given in the Athenian democracy to the magistrate who exercised those spiritual functions which in the monarchical times had belonged to the sovereign. His court took cognizance of offences against the religion of the state.

[2] See Herodotus, viii. 28.

[3] A sow was sacrificed to Ceres at the admission to the greater mysteries.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE GREAT LAWSUIT

BETWEEN THE PARISHES OF

ST. DENNIS AND ST. GEORGE IN THE WATER

Knight's Quarterly Magazine, April, 1824

THE parish of St. Dennis is one of the most pleasant parts of the county in which it is situated. It is fertile, well wooded, well watered, and of an excellent air. For many generations the manor had been holden in tail-male by a worshipful family, who have always taken precedence of their neighbors at the races and the sessions.

In ancient times the affairs of this parish were administered by a Court-Baron, in which the freeholders were judges; and the rates were levied by select vestries of the inhabitant householders. But at length these good customs fell into disuse. The Lords of the Manor, indeed, still held courts for form's sake; but they or their stewards had the whole management of affairs. They demanded services, duties, and customs to which they had no just title. Nay, they would often bring actions against their neighbors for their own private advantage, and then send in the bill to the parish. No objection was made, during many years, to these proceedings, so that the rates became heavier and heavier: nor was any person exempted from these demands, except the footmen and gamekeepers of the squire and the rector of the parish. They indeed were never checked in any excess. They would come to an honest laborer's cottage, eat his pancakes, tuck his fowls into their pockets, and cane the poor man himself. If he went up to the great house to complain, it was hard to get the speech of Sir Lewis; and, indeed, his only chance of being righted was to coax the squire's pretty housekeeper, who could do what she pleased with her master. If he ventured to intrude upon the Lord of the Manor without this precaution, he gained nothing by his pains. Sir Lewis, indeed, would at first receive him with a civil face; for, to give him his due, he could be a fine gentleman when he pleased. "Good-day, my friend," he would say, "what situation have you in my family?" "Bless your honor!" says the poor fellow, "I am not one of your honor's servants; I rent a small piece of ground, your honor." "Then, you dog," quoth the squire, "what do you mean by coming here? Has a gentleman nothing to do but to hear the complaints of clowns? Here! Philip, James, Dick, toss this fellow in a blanket; or duck him, and set him in the stocks to dry."

One of these precious Lords of the Manor enclosed a deer park; and, in order to stock it, he seized all the pretty pet fawns that his tenants had brought up, without paying them a farthing, or asking their leave. It was a sad day for the parish of St. Dennis. Indeed, I do not believe that all his oppressive exactions and long bills enraged the poor tenants so much as this cruel measure.

Yet for a long time, in spite of all these inconveniences, St. Dennis's was a very pleasant place. The people could not refrain from capering if they heard the sound of a fiddle. And, if they were inclined to be riotous, Sir Lewis had only to send for Punch, or the dancing dogs, and all was quiet again. But this could not last forever; they began to think more and more of their condition; and, at last, a club of foul-mouthed, good-for-nothing rascals was held at the Sign of the Devil, for the purpose of abusing the squire and the parson. The doctor, to own the truth, was old and indolent, extremely fat and greedy. He had not preached a tolerable sermon for a long time. The squire was still worse: so that, partly by truth and partly by falsehood, the club set the whole parish against their superiors. The boys scrawled caricatures of the clergyman upon the church door, and shot at the landlord with popguns as he rode a-hunting. It was even whispered about that the Lord of the Manor had no right to his estate, and that, if he were compelled to produce the original title deeds, it would be found that he only held the estate in trust for the inhabitants of the parish.

In the meantime the squire was pressed more and more for money. The parish could pay no more. The rector refused to lend a farthing. The Jews were clamorous for their money; and the landlord had no other resource than to call together the inhabitants of the parish, and to request their assistance. They now attacked him furiously about their grievances, and insisted that he should relinquish his oppressive powers. They insisted that his footmen should be kept in order, that the parson should pay his share of the rates, that the children of the parish should be allowed to fish in the trout stream, and to gather blackberries in the hedges. They at last went so far as to demand that he should acknowledge that he held his estate only in trust for them. His distress compelled him to submit. They, in return, agreed to set him free from his pecuniary difficulties, and to suffer him to inhabit the manor house; and only annoyed him from time to time by singing impudent ballads under his window.

The neighboring gentlefolks did not look on these proceedings with much complacency. It is true that Sir Lewis and his ancestors had plagued them with lawsuits, and affronted them at county meetings. Still they preferred the insolence of a gentleman to that of the rabble, and felt some uneasiness lest the example should infect their own tenants.

A large party of them met at the house of Lord Cæsar Germain. Lord Cæsar was the proudest man in the county. His family was very ancient and illustrious, though not particularly opulent. He had invited most of his wealthy neighbors. There was Mrs. Kitty North, the relict of poor Squire Peter, respecting whom the coroner's jury had found a verdict of accidental death, but whose fate had nevertheless excited strange whispers in the neighborhood. There was Squire Don, the owner of the great West Indian property, who was not so rich as he had formerly been, but still retained his pride, and kept up his customary pomp; so that he had plenty of plate but no breeches. There was Squire Von Blunderbussen, who had succeeded to the estates of his uncle, old Colonel Frederic Blunderbussen, of the hussars. The colonel was a very singular old fellow; he used to learn a page of Chambaud's grammar, and to translate Télémaque, every morning, and he kept six French masters to teach him to parleyvoo. Nevertheless, he was a shrewd, clever man, and improved his estate with so much care, sometimes by honest and sometimes by dishonest means, that he left a very pretty property to his nephew.

Lord Cæsar poured out a glass of Tokay for Mrs. Kitty. "Your health, my dear madam: I never saw you look more charming. Pray, what think you of these doings at St. Dennis's?"

"Fine doings! indeed!" interrupted Von Blunderbussen; "I wish that we had my old uncle alive; he would have had some of them up to the halberts. He knew how to use a cat-o'-nine-tails. If things go on in this way, a gentleman will not be able to horsewhip an impudent farmer, or to say a civil word to a milkmaid."

"Indeed, it's very true, Sir," said Mrs. Kitty; "their insolence is intolerable. Look at me, for instance; — a poor lone woman! — My dear Peter dead! I loved him: — so I did; and, when he died, I was so hysterical you cannot think. And now I cannot lean on the arm of a decent footman, or take a walk with a tall grenadier behind me, just to protect me from audacious vagabonds, but they must have their nauseous suspicions; — odious creatures!"

"This must be stopped," replied Lord Cæsar. "We ought to contribute to support my poor brother-in-law against these rascals. I will write to Squire Guelf on this subject by this night's post. His name is always at the head of our county subscriptions."

If the people of St. Dennis's had been angry before, they were well-nigh mad when they heard this conversation. The whole parish ran to the manor house. Sir Lewis's Swiss porter shut the door against them; but they broke in and knocked him on the head for his impudence. They then seized the squire, hooted at him, pelted him, ducked him, and carried him to the watch-house. They turned the rector into the street, burnt his wig and band, and sold the church plate by auction. They put up a painted Jezebel in the pulpit to preach. They scratched out the texts which were written round the church, and scribbled profane scraps of songs and plays in their place. They set the organ playing to pothouse tunes. Instead of being decently asked in church, they were married over a broomstick. But, of all their whims, the use of the new patent steel-traps was the most remarkable.

This trap was constructed on a completely new principle. It consisted of a cleaver hung in a frame like a window; when any poor wretch got in, down it came with a tremendous din, and took off his head in a twinkling. They got the squire into one of these machines. In order to prevent any of his partisans from getting footing in the parish, they placed traps at every corner. It was impossible to walk through the highway at broad noon without tumbling into one or other of them. No man could go about his business in security. Yet so great was the hatred which the inhabitants entertained for the old family, that a few decent honest people, who begged them to take down the steel-traps, and to put up humane man-traps in their room, were very roughly handled for their good nature.

In the meantime the neighboring gentry undertook a suit against the parish on the behalf of Sir Lewis's heir, and applied to Squire Guelf for his assistance.

Everybody knows that Squire Guelf is more closely tied up than any gentleman in the shire. He could, therefore, lend them no help; but he referred them to the Vestry of the Parish of St. George in the Water. These good people had long borne a grudge against their neighbors on the other side of the stream; and some mutual trespasses had lately occurred which increased their hostility.

There was an honest Irishman, a great favorite among them, who used to entertain them with raree-shows, and to exhibit a magic lantern to the children on winter evenings. He had gone quite mad upon this subject. Sometimes he would call out in the middle of the street: "Take care of that corner, neighbors; for the love of Heaven, keep clear of that post; there is a patent steel-trap concealed thereabouts." Sometimes he would be disturbed by frightful dreams; then he would get up at dead of night, open his window, and cry "Fire!" till the parish was roused, and the engines sent for. The pulpit of the Parish of St. George seemed likely to fall; I believe that the only reason was that the parson had grown too fat and heavy; but nothing would persuade this honest man but that it was a scheme of the people at St. Dennis's, and that they had sawed through the pillars in order to break the rector's neck. Once he went about with a knife in his pocket, and told all the persons whom he met that it had been sharpened by the knife grinder of the next parish to cut their throats. These extravagances had a great effect on the people; and the more so because they were espoused by Squire Guelf's steward, who was the most influential person in the parish. He was a very fair-spoken man, very attentive to the main chance, and the idol of the old women, because he never played at skittles or danced with the girls; and, indeed, never took any recreation but that of drinking on Saturday nights with his friend Harry, the Scotch pedlar. His supporters called him Sweet William; his enemies the Bottomless Pit.

The people of St. Dennis's, however, had their advocates. There was Frank, the richest farmer in the parish, whose great-grandfather had been knocked on the head many years before, in a squabble between the parish and a former landlord. There was Dick, the merry-andrew, rather light-fingered and riotous, but a clever, droll fellow. Above all, there was Charley, the publican, a jolly, fat, honest lad, a great favorite with the women, who, if he had not been rather too fond of ale and chuck-farthing, would have been the best fellow in the neighborhood.

"My boys," said Charley, "this is exceedingly well for Madam North, — not that I would speak uncivilly of her; she put up my picture in her best room, bless her for it! But, I say, this is very well for her, and for Lord Cæsar, and Squire Don, and Colonel Von, — but what affair is it of yours or mine? It is not to be wondered at that gentlemen should wish to keep poor people out of their own. But it is strange, indeed, that they should expect the poor themselves to combine against their own interests. If the folks at St. Dennis's should attack us we have the law and our cudgels to protect us. But why, in the name of wonder, are we to attack them? When old Sir Charles, who was Lord of the Manor formerly, and the parson, who was presented by him to the living, tried to bully the vestry, did not we knock their heads together, and go to meeting to hear Jeremiah Ringletub preach? And did the Squire Don, or the great Sir Lewis, that lived at that time, or the Germains, say a word against us for it? Mind your own business, my lads; law is not to be had for nothing; and we, you may be sure, shall have to pay the whole bill."

Nevertheless the people of St. George's were resolved on law. They cried out most lustily, "Squire Guelf forever! Sweet William forever! No steel-traps!" Squire

Guelf took all the rascally footmen who had worn old Sir Lewis's livery into his service. They were fed in the kitchen on the very best of everything, though they had no settlement. Many people, and the paupers in particular, grumbled at these proceedings. The steward, however, devised a way to keep them quiet.

There had lived in this parish for many years an old gentleman, named Sir Habeas Corpus. He was said by some to be of Saxon, by some of Norman extraction. Some maintain that he was not born till after the time of Sir Charles, to whom we have before alluded. Others are of opinion that he was a legitimate son of old Lady Magna Charta, although he was long concealed and kept out of his birthright. Certain it is that he was a very benevolent person. Whenever any poor fellow was taken up on grounds which he thought insufficient, he used to attend on his behalf and bail him; and thus he had become so popular that to take direct measures against him was out of the question.

The steward, accordingly, brought a dozen physicians to examine Sir Habeas. After consultation, they reported that he was in a very bad way, and ought not, on any account, to be allowed to stir out for several months. Fortified with this authority, the parish officers put him to bed, closed his windows, and barred his doors. They paid him every attention, and from time to time issued bulletins of his health. The steward never spoke of him without declaring that he was the best gentleman in the world; but excellent care was taken that he should never stir out of doors.

When this obstacle was removed, the Squire and the steward kept the parish in excellent order; flogged this man, sent that man to the stocks, and pushed forward the lawsuit with a noble disregard of expense. They were, however, wanting either in skill or in fortune. And everything went against them after their antagonists had begun to employ Solicitor Nap.

Who does not know the name of Solicitor Nap? At what alehouse is not his behavior discussed? In what print shop is not his picture seen? Yet how little truth has been said about him! Some people hold that he used to give laudanum by pints to his sick clerks for his amusement. Others, whose number has very much increased since he was killed by the jail distemper, conceive that he was the very model of honor and good nature. I shall try to tell the truth about him.

He was assuredly an excellent solicitor. In his way he never was surpassed. As soon as the parish began to employ him, their cause took a turn. In a very little time they were successful; and Nap became rich. He now set up for a gentleman; took possession of the old manor house; got into the commission of the peace, and affected to be on a par with the best of the county. He governed the vestries as absolutely as the old family had done. Yet, to give him his due, he managed things with far more discretion than either Sir Lewis or the rioters who had pulled the Lords of the Manor down. He kept his servants in tolerable order. He removed the steel-traps from the highways and the corners of the streets. He still left a few indeed in the more exposed parts of his premises; and set up a board announcing that traps and spring guns were set in his grounds. He brought the poor parson back to the parish; and, though he did not enable him to keep a fine house and a coach as formerly, he settled him in a snug little cottage, and allowed him a pleasant pad-nag. He whitewashed the church again; and put the stocks, which had been much wanted of late, into good repair.

With the neighboring gentry, however, he was no favorite. He was crafty and litigious. He cared nothing for right, if he could raise a point of law against them. He pounded their cattle, broke their hedges, and seduced their tenants from them. He almost ruined Lord Cæsar with actions, in every one of which he was successful.

Von Blunderbussen went to law with him for an alleged trespass, but was cast, and almost ruined by the costs of suit. He next took a fancy to the seat of Squire Don, who was, to say the truth, little better than an idiot. He asked the poor dupe to dinner, and then threatened to have him tossed in a blanket unless he would make over his estates to him. The poor Squire signed and sealed a deed by which the property was assigned to Joe, a brother of Nap's, in trust for and to the use of Nap himself. The tenants, however, stood out. They maintained that the estate was entailed, and refused to pay rents to the new landlord; and in this refusal they were stoutly supported by the people in St. George's.

About the same time Nap took it into his head to match with quality, and nothing would serve him but one of the Miss Germains. Lord Cæsar swore like a trooper; but there was no help for it. Nap had twice put executions in his principal residence, and had refused to discharge the latter of the two, till he had extorted a bond from his Lordship, which compelled him to comply.

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN MR. ABRAHAM COWLEY AND MR. JOHN MILTON

TOUCHING THE GREAT CIVIL WAR

SET DOWN BY A GENTLEMAN OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE

> "Referre sermones Deorum et
> Magna modis tenuare parvis." — HORACE

Knight's Quarterly Magazine, August, 1824

I HAVE thought it good to set down in writing a memorable debate, wherein I was a listener, and two men of pregnant parts and great reputation discoursers; hoping that my friends will not be displeased to have a record both of the strange times through which I have lived, and of the famous men with whom I have conversed. It chanced, in the warm and beautiful spring of the year 1665, a little before the saddest summer that ever London saw, that I went to the Bowling-Green at Piccadilly, whither, at that time, the best gentry made continual resort. There I met Mr. Cowley, who had lately left Barnelms. There was then a house preparing for him at Chertsey; and, till it should be finished, he had come up for a short time to London, that he might urge a suit to his Grace of Buckingham touching certain lands of her Majesty's, whereof he requested a lease. I had the honor to be familiarly acquainted with that worthy gentleman and most excellent poet, whose death hath been deplored with as general a consent of all Powers that delight in the woods, or in verse, or in love, as was of old that of Daphnis or of Gallus.

After some talk, which it is not material to set down at large, concerning his suit and his vexations at the court, where indeed his honesty did him more harm than his parts could do him good, I entreated him to dine with me at my lodging in the Temple, which he most courteously promised. And, that so eminent a guest might not lack a better entertainment than cooks or vintners can provide, I sent to the house of Mr. John Milton, in the Artillery-Walk, to beg that he would also be my guest. For, though he had been secretary, first to the Council of State, and, after that, to the Protector, and Mr. Cowley had held the same post under the Lord St. Albans in his banishment, I hoped, notwithstanding, that they would think themselves rather united by their common art than divided by their different factions. And so indeed it proved. For, while we sat at table, they talked freely of many men and things, as well ancient as modern, with much civility. Nay, Mr. Milton, who seldom tasted wine, both because of his singular temperance and because of his gout, did more than once pledge Mr. Cowley, who was indeed no hermit in diet. At last, being heated, Mr. Milton begged that I would open the windows. "Nay," said I, "if you desire fresh air and coolness, what should hinder us, as the evening is fair, from sailing for an hour on the river?" To this they both cheerfully consented; and forth we walked, Mr. Cowley and I leading Mr. Milton between us, to the Temple Stairs. There we took a boat; and thence we were rowed up the river.

The wind was pleasant; the evening fine; the sky, the earth, and the water beautiful to look upon. But Mr. Cowley and I held our peace, and said nothing of the gay sights around us, lest we should too feelingly remind Mr. Milton of his calamity; whereof, however, he needed no monitor: for soon he said sadly, "Ah, Mr. Cowley, you are a happy man. What would I now give but for one more look at the sun, and the waters, and the gardens of this fair city!"

"I know not," said Mr. Cowley, "whether we ought not rather to envy you for that which makes you to envy others: and that, specially in this place, where all eyes which are not closed in blindness ought to become fountains of tears. What can we look upon which is not a memorial of change and sorrow, of fair things vanished, and evil things done? When I see the gate of Whitehall, and the stately pillars of the Banqueting House, I cannot choose but think of what I have there seen in former days, masques, and pageants, and dances, and smiles, and the waving of graceful heads, and the bounding of delicate feet. And then I turn to thoughts of other things, which even to remember makes me to blush and weep, — of the great black scaffold, and the axe and block, which were placed before those very windows; and the voice seems to sound in mine ears, the lawless and terrible voice, which cried out that the head of a king was the head of a traitor. There stands Westminster Hall, which who can look upon and not tremble to think how time, and change, and death confound the counsels of the wise, and beat down the weapons of the mighty? How have I seen it surrounded with tens of thousands of petitioners crying for justice and privilege! How have I heard it shake with fierce and proud words, which made the hearts of the people burn within them! Then it is blockaded by dragoons, and cleared by pikemen. And they who have conquered their master go forth trembling at the word of their servant. And yet a little while, and the usurper comes forth from it, in his robe of ermine, with the golden staff in one hand and the Bible in the other, amidst the roaring of the guns and the shouting of the people. And yet again a little while, and the doors are thronged with multitudes in black, and the hearse and the plumes come forth; and the tyrant is borne, in more than royal pomp, to a royal sepulchre. A few days more, and his head is fixed to rot on the pinnacles of that very hall where he sat on a throne in his life, and lay in state after his death. When I think on all these things, to look round me makes me sad at heart. True it is that God hath restored to us our old laws, and the rightful line of our kings. Yet, how I know not, but it seems to me that something is wanting — that our court hath not the old gravity, nor our people the old loyalty. These evil times, like the great Deluge, have overwhelmed and confused all earthly things. And, even as those waters, though at last they abated, yet, as the learned write, destroyed all trace of the Garden of Eden, so that its place hath never since been found, so hath this opening of all the flood-gates of political evil effaced all marks of the ancient political paradise."

"Sir, by your favor," said Mr. Milton, "though, from many circumstances both of body and of fortune, I might plead fairer excuses for despondency than yourself, I yet look not so sadly either on the past or on the future. That a deluge hath passed over this our nation, I deny not. But I hold it not to be such a deluge as that of which you speak; but rather a blessed flood, like those of the Nile, which in its overflow doth indeed wash away ancient landmarks, and confound boundaries, and sweep away dwellings, yea, doth give birth to many foul and dangerous reptiles. Yet hence is the fulness of the granary, the beauty of the garden, the nurture of all living things.

"I remember well, Mr. Cowley, what you have said concerning these things in your Discourse of the Government of Oliver Cromwell, which my friend Ellwood read to me last year. Truly, for elegance and rhetoric, that essay is to be compared with the finest tractates of Isocrates and Cicero. But neither that nor any other book, nor any events, which with most men have, more than any book, weight and authority, have altered my opinion, that, of all assemblies that ever were in this world, the best and the most useful was our Long Parliament. I speak not this as wishing to provoke debate; which neither yet do I decline."

Mr. Cowley was, as I could see, a little nettled. Yet, as he was a man of a kind disposition and a most refined courtesy, he put a force upon himself, and answered with more vehemence and quickness indeed than was his wont, yet not uncivilly. "Surely, Mr. Milton, you speak not as you think. I am indeed one of those who believe that God hath reserved to himself the censure of kings, and that their crimes and oppressions are not to be resisted by the hands of their subjects. Yet can I easily find excuse for the violence of such as are stung to madness by grievous tyranny. But what shall we say for these men? Which of their just demands was not granted? Which even of their cruel and unreasonable requisitions, so as it were not inconsistent with all law and order, was refused? Had they not sent Strafford to the block and Laud to the Tower? Had they not destroyed the Courts of the High Commission and the Star Chamber? Had they not reversed the proceedings confirmed by the voices of the judges of England, in the matter of ship-money? Had they not taken from the king his ancient and most lawful power touching the order of knighthood? Had they not provided that, after their dissolution, triennial Parliaments should be holden, and that their own power should continue till of their great condescension they should be pleased to resign it themselves? What more could they ask? Was it not enough that they had taken from their king all his oppressive powers, and many that were most salutary? Was it not enough that they had filled his council-board with his enemies, and his prisons with his adherents? Was it not enough that they had raised a furious multitude, to shout and swagger daily under the very windows of his royal palace? Was it not enough that they had taken from him the most blessed prerogative of princely mercy; that, complaining of intolerance themselves, they had denied all toleration to others; that they had urged, against forms, scruples childish as those of any formalist; that they had persecuted the least remnant of the popish rites with the fiercest bitterness of the popish spirit? Must they besides all this have full power to command his armies, and to massacre his friends?

"For military command, it was never known in any monarchy, nay, in any well-ordered republic, that it was committed to the debates of a large and unsettled assembly. For their other requisition, that he should give up to their vengeance all who had defended the rights of his crown, his honor must have been ruined if he had complied. Is it not therefore plain that they desired these things only in order that, by refusing, his Majesty might give them a pretence for war?

"Men have often risen up against fraud, against cruelty, against rapine. But when before was it known that concessions were met with importunities, graciousness with insults, the open palm of bounty with the clenched fist of malice? Was it like trusty delegates of the Commons of England, and faithful stewards of their liberty and their wealth, to engage them for such causes in civil war, which both to liberty and to wealth is of all things the most hostile? Evil indeed must be the disease which is not more tolerable than such a medicine. Those who, even to save a nation from tyrants, excite it to civil war do in general but minister to it the same miserable kind of relief wherewith the wizards of Pharaoh mocked the Egyptian. We read that, when Moses had turned their waters into blood, those impious magicians, intending, not benefit to the thirsting people, but vain and emulous ostentation of their own art, did themselves also change into blood the water which the plague had spared. Such sad comfort do those who stir up war minister to the oppressed. But here where was the oppression? What was the favor which had not been granted? What was the evil which had not been removed? What further could they desire?"

"These questions," said Mr. Milton austerely, "have indeed often deceived the ignorant; but that Mr. Cowley should have been so beguiled, I marvel. You ask what more the Parliament could desire? I will answer you in one word, security. What are votes, and statutes, and resolutions? They have no eyes to see, no hands to strike and avenge. They must have some safeguard from without. Many things, therefore, which in themselves were peradventure hurtful, was this Parliament constrained to ask, lest otherwise good laws and precious rights should be without defence. Nor did they want a great and signal example of this danger. I need not remind you that, many years before, the two Houses had presented to the king the Petition of Right, wherein were set down all the most valuable privileges of the people of this realm. Did not Charles accept it? Did he not declare it to be law? Was it not as fully enacted as ever were any of those bills of the Long Parliament concerning which you spoke? And were those privileges therefore enjoyed more fully by the people? No; the king did from that time redouble his oppressions as if to avenge himself for the shame of having been compelled to renounce them. Then were our estates laid under shameful impositions, our houses ransacked, our bodies imprisoned. Then was the steel of the hangman blunted with mangling the ears of harmless men. Then our very minds were fettered, and the iron entered into our souls. Then we were compelled to hide our hatred, our sorrow, and our scorn, to laugh with hidden faces at the mummery of Laud, to curse under our breath the tyranny of Wentworth. Of old time it was well and nobly said, by one of our kings, that an Englishman ought to be free as his thoughts. Our prince reversed the maxim; he strove to make our thoughts as much slave as ourselves. To sneer at a Romish pageant, to miscall a lord's crest, were crimes for which there was no mercy. These were all the fruits which we gathered from those excellent laws of the former Parliament, from these solemn promises of the king. Were we to be deceived again? Were we again to give subsidies, and receive nothing but promises? Were we again to make wholesome statutes, and then leave them to be broken daily and hourly, until the oppressor should have squandered another supply, and should be ready for another perjury? You ask what they could desire which he had not already granted. Let me ask of you another question. What pledge could he give which he had not already violated? From the first year of his reign, whenever he had need of the purses of his Commons to support the revels of Buckingham or the processions of Laud, he had assured them that, as he was a gentleman and a king, he would sacredly preserve their rights. He had pawned those solemn pledges, and pawned them again and again; but when had he redeemed them? 'Upon my faith,' — 'Upon my sacred word,' — 'Upon the honor of a prince,' came so easily from his lips, and dwelt so short a time on his mind, that they were as little to be trusted as the 'By these hilts' of an Alsatian dicer.

"Therefore it is that I praise this Parliament for what else I might have condemned. If what he had granted had been granted graciously and readily, if what he had before promised had been faithfully observed, they could not be defended. It was because he had never yielded the worst abuse without a long struggle, and seldom without a large bribe; it was because he had no sooner disentangled himself from his troubles than he forgot his promises; and, more like a villainous huckster than a great king, kept both the prerogative and the large price which had been paid to him to forego it; it was because of these things that it was necessary and just to bind with forcible restraints one who could be bound neither by law nor honor. Nay, even while he was making those very concessions of which you speak, he betrayed his deadly hatred against the people and their friends. Not only did he, contrary to all that ever was deemed lawful in England, order that members of the Commons House of

Parliament should be impeached of high treason at the bar of the Lords; thereby violating both the trial by jury and the privileges of the House; but, not content with breaking the law by his ministers, he went himself armed to assail it. In the birthplace and sanctuary of freedom, in the House itself, nay, in the very chair of the speaker, placed for the protection of free speech and privilege, he sat, rolling his eyes round the benches, searching for those whose blood he desired, and singling out his opposers to the slaughter. This most foul outrage fails. Then again for the old arts. Then come gracious messages. Then come courteous speeches. Then is again mortgaged his often forfeited honor. He will never again violate the laws. He will respect their rights as if they were his own. He pledges the dignity of his crown; that crown which had been committed to him for the weal of his people, and which he never named but that he might the more easily delude and oppress them.

"The power of the sword, I grant you, was not one to be permanently possessed by Parliament. Neither did that Parliament demand it as a permanent possession. They asked it only for temporary security. Nor can I see on what conditions they could safely make peace with that false and wicked king, save such as would deprive him of all power to injure.

"For civil war, that it is an evil I dispute not. But that it is the greatest of evils, that I stoutly deny. It doth indeed appear to the misjudging to be a worse calamity than bad government, because its miseries are collected together within a short space and time, and may easily at one view be taken in and perceived. But the misfortunes of nations ruled by tyrants, being distributed over many centuries and many places, as they are of greater weight and number, so are they of less display. When the Devil of tyranny hath gone into the body politic he departs not but with struggles, and foaming, and great convulsions. Shall he, therefore, vex it forever, lest, in going out, he for a moment tear and rend it? Truly this argument touching the evils of war would better become my friend Ellwood, or some other of the people called Quakers, than a courtier and a cavalier. It applies no more to this war than to all others, as well foreign as domestic, and, in this war, no more to the Houses than to the King; nay, not so much, since he by a little sincerity and moderation might have rendered that needless which their duty to God and man then enforced them to do."

"Pardon me, Mr. Milton," said Mr. Cowley; "I grieve to hear you speak thus of that good king. Most unhappy indeed he was, in that he reigned at a time when the spirit of the then living generation was for freedom, and the precedents of former ages for prerogative. His case was like to that of Christopher Columbus, when he sailed forth on an unknown ocean, and found that the compass, whereby he shaped his course, had shifted from the north pole whereto before it had constantly pointed. So it was with Charles. His compass varied; and therefore he could not tack aright. If he had been an absolute king he would doubtless, like Titus Vespasian, have been called the delight of the human race. If he had been a Doge of Venice, or a Stadtholder of Holland, he would never have outstepped the laws. But he lived when our government had neither clear definitions nor strong sanctions. Let, therefore, his faults be ascribed to the time. Of his virtues the praise is his own.

"Never was there a more gracious prince, or a more proper gentleman. In every pleasure he was temperate, in conversation mild and grave, in friendship constant, to his servants liberal, to his queen faithful and loving, in battle brave, in sorrow and captivity resolved, in death most Christian and forgiving.

"For his oppressions, let us look at the former history of this realm. James was never accounted a tyrant. Elizabeth is esteemed to have been the mother of her people. Were they less arbitrary? Did they never lay hands on the purses of their subjects but by Act of Parliament? Did they never confine insolent and disobedient men but in due course of law? Was the court of Star Chamber less active? Were the ears of libellers more safe? I pray you, let not King Charles be thus dealt with. It was enough that in his life he was tried for an alleged breach of laws which none ever heard named till they were discovered for his destruction. Let not his fame be treated as was his sacred and anointed body. Let not his memory be tried by principles found out *ex post facto*. Let us not judge by the spirit of one generation a man whose disposition had been formed by the temper and fashion of another."

"Nay, but conceive me, Mr. Cowley," said Mr. Milton; "inasmuch as, at the beginning of his reign, he imitated those who had governed before him, I blame him not. To expect that kings will, of their own free choice, abridge their prerogative, were argument of but slender wisdom. Whatever, therefore, lawless, unjust, or cruel, he either did or permitted during the first years of his reign, I pass by. But for what was done after that he had solemnly given his consent to the Petition of Right, where shall we find defence? Let it be supposed, which yet I concede not, that the tyranny of his father and of Queen Elizabeth had been no less rigorous than was his. But had his father, had that queen, sworn, like him, to abstain from those rigors? Had they, like him, for good and valuable consideration, aliened their hurtful prerogatives? Surely not: from whatever excuse you can plead for him he had wholly excluded himself. The borders of countries, we know, are mostly the seats of perpetual wars and tumults. It was the same with the undefined frontiers, which of old separated privilege and prerogative. They were the debatable land of our polity. It was no marvel if, both on the one side and on the other, inroads were often made. But, when treaties have been concluded, spaces measured, lines drawn, landmarks set up, that which before might pass for innocent error or just reprisal becomes robbery, perjury, deadly sin. He knew not, you say, which of his powers were founded on ancient law, and which only on vicious example. But had he not read the Petition of Right? Had not proclamation been made from his throne, 'Soit fait comme il est désiré'?

"For his private virtues they are beside the question. Remember you not" — and Mr. Milton smiled, but somewhat sternly — "what Dr. Caius saith in the Merry Wives of Shakespeare? 'What shall the honest man do in my closet? There is no honest man that shall come in my closet.' Even so say I. There is no good man who shall make us his slaves. If he break his word to his people, is it a sufficient defence that he keeps it to his companions? If he oppress and extort all day, shall he be held blameless because he prayeth at night and morning? If he be insatiable in plunder and revenge, shall we pass it by because in meat and drink he is temperate? If he have lived like a tyrant, shall all be forgotten because he hath died like a martyr?

"He was a man, as I think, who had so much semblance of virtues as might make his vices most dangerous. He was not a tyrant after our wonted English model. The second Richard, the second and fourth Edwards, and the eighth Harry, were men profuse, gay, boisterous; lovers of women and of wine, of no outward sancity or gravity. Charles was a ruler after the Italian fashion; grave, demure, of a solemn carriage, and a sober diet; as constant at prayers as a priest, as heedless of oaths as an atheist."

Mr. Cowley answered somewhat sharply: "I am sorry, Sir, to hear you speak thus. I had hoped that the vehemence of spirit which was caused by these violent times had now abated. Yet, sure, Mr. Milton, whatever you may think of the character of King Charles, you will not still justify his murder."

"Sir," said Mr. Milton, "I must have been of a hard and strange nature, if the vehemence which was imputed to me in my younger days had not been diminished by the afflictions wherewith it hath pleased Almighty God to chasten my age. I will not now defend all that I may heretofore have written. But this I say, that I perceive not wherefore a king should be exempted from all punishment. Is it just that where most is given least should be required? Or politic that where there is the greatest power to injure there should be no danger to restrain? But, you will say, there is no such law. Such a law there is. There is the law of self-preservation written by God himself on our hearts. There is the primal compact and bond of society, not graven on stone, nor sealed with wax, nor put down on parchment, nor set forth in any express form of words by men when of old they came together; but implied in the very act that they so came together, presupposed in all subsequent law, not to be repealed by any authority, not invalidated by being omitted in any code; inasmuch as from thence are all codes and all authority.

"Neither do I well see wherefore you Cavaliers, and, indeed, many of us whom you merrily call Roundheads, distinguish between those who fought against King Charles, and specially after the second commission given to Sir Thomas Fairfax, and those who condemned him to death. Sure if his person were inviolable, it was as wicked to lift the sword against it at Naseby as the axe at Whitehall. If his life might justly be taken, why not in course of trial as well as by right of war?

"Thus much in general as touching the right. But, for the execution of King Charles in particular, I will not now undertake to defend it. Death is inflicted, not that the culprit may die, but that the state may be thereby advantaged. And, from all that I know, I think that the death of King Charles hath more hindered than advanced the liberties of England.

"First, he left an heir. He was in captivity. The heir was in freedom. He was odious to the Scots. The heir was favored by them. To kill the captive therefore, whereby the heir, in the apprehension of all royalists, became forthwith King — what was it, in truth, but to set their captive free, and to give him besides other great advantages?

"Next, it was a deed most odious to the people, and not only to your party, but to many among ourselves; and, as it is perilous for any government to outrage the public opinion, so most was it perilous for a government which had from that opinion alone its birth, its nurture, and its defence.

"Yet doth not this properly belong to our dispute; nor can these faults be justly charged upon that most renowned Parliament. For, as you know, the high court of justice was not established until the House had been purged of such members as were adverse to the army, and brought wholly under the control of the chief officers."

"And who," said Mr. Cowley, "levied that army? Who commissioned those officers? Was not the fate of the Commons as justly deserved as was that of Diomedes, who was devoured by those horses whom he had himself taught to feed on the flesh and blood of men? How could they hope that others would respect laws which they had themselves insulted; that swords which had been drawn against the prerogatives of the King would be put up at an ordinance of the Commons? It was believed, of old, that there were some devils easily raised but never to be laid; insomuch that, if a magician called them up, he should be forced to find them always some employment; for, though they would do all his bidding, yet, if he left them but for one moment without some work of evil to perform, they would turn their claws against himself. Such a fiend is an army. They who evoke it cannot dismiss it. They are at once its masters and its slaves. Let them not fail to find for it task after task of blood and rapine. Let them not leave it for a moment in repose, lest it tear them in pieces.

"Thus was it with that famous assembly. They formed a force which they could neither govern nor resist. They made it powerful. They made it fanatical. As if military insolence were not of itself sufficiently dangerous, they heightened it with spiritual pride, — they encouraged their soldiers to rave from the tops of tubs against the men of Belial, till every trooper thought himself a prophet. They taught them to abuse popery, till every drummer fancied that he was as infallible as a pope.

"Then it was that religion changed her nature. She was no longer the parent of arts and letters, of wholesome knowledge, of innocent pleasures, of blessed household smiles. In their place came sour faces, whining voices, the chattering of fools, the yells of madmen. Then men fasted from meat and drink, who fasted not from bribes and blood. Then men frowned at stage-plays, who smiled at massacres. Then men preached against painted faces, who felt no remorse for their own most painted lives. Religion had been a pole-star to light and to guide. It was now more like to that ominous star in the book of the Apocalypse, which fell from heaven upon the fountains and rivers and changed them into wormwood; for even so did it descend from its high and celestial dwelling-place to plague this earth, and to turn into bitterness all that was sweet, and into poison all that was nourishing.

"Therefore it was not strange that such things should follow. They who had closed the barriers of London against the King could not defend them against their own creatures. They who had so stoutly cried for privilege, when that prince, most unadvisedly no doubt, came among them to demand their members, durst not wag their fingers when Oliver filled their hall with soldiers, gave their mace to a corporal, put their keys in his pocket, and drove them forth with base terms, borrowed half from the conventicle and half from the alehouse. Then were we, like the trees of the forest in holy writ, given over to the rule of the bramble; then from the basest of the shrubs came forth the fire which devoured the cedars of Lebanon. We bowed down before a man of mean birth, of ungraceful demeanor, of stammering and most vulgar utterance, of scandalous and notorious hypocrisy. Our laws were made and unmade at his pleasure; the constitution of our Parliaments changed by his writ and proclamation; our persons imprisoned; our property plundered; our lands and houses overrun with soldiers; and the great charter itself was but argument for a scurrilous jest; and for all this we may thank that Parliament: for never, unless they had so violently shaken the vessel, could such foul dregs have risen to the top."

Then answered Mr. Milton: "What you have now said comprehends so great a number of subjects, that it would require, not an evening's sail on the Thames, but rather a voyage to the Indies, accurately to treat of all; yet, in as few words as I may, I will explain my sense of these matters.

"First, as to the army. An army, as you have well set forth, is always a weapon dangerous to those who use it; yet he who falls among thieves spares not to fire his musquetoon, because he may be slain if it burst in his hand. Nor must states refrain from defending themselves, lest their defenders should at last turn against them. Nevertheless, against this danger statesmen should carefully provide; and, that they may do so, they should take especial care that neither the officers nor the soldiers do forget that they are also citizens. I do believe that the English army would have continued to obey the Parliament with all duty, but for one act, which, as it was in intention, in seeming, and in immediate effect, worthy to be compared with the most famous in history, so was it, in its final consequence, most injurious. I speak of that ordinance called the *self-denying*, and of the new model of the army. By those measures the Commons gave up the command of their forces into the hands of men who were not of themselves. Hence, doubtless, derived no small honor to that noble assembly, which sacrificed to the hope of public good the assurance of private advantage. And, as to the conduct of the war, the scheme prospered. Witness the battle of Naseby, and the memorable exploits of Fairfax in the west. But thereby the Parliament lost that hold on the soldiers and that power to control them, which they retained while every regiment was commanded by their own members. Politicians there be, who would wholly divide the legislative from the executive power. In the golden age this may have succeeded; in the millennium it may succeed again. But, where great armies and great taxes are required, there the executive government must always hold a great authority, which authority, that it may not oppress and destroy the legislature, must be in some manner blended with it. The leaders of foreign mercenaries have always been most dangerous to a country. The officers of native armies, deprived of the civil privileges of other men, are as much to be feared. This was the great error of that Parliament; and, though an error it were, it was an error generous, virtuous, and more to be deplored than censured.

"Hence came the power of the army and its leaders, and especially of that most famous leader, whom both in our conversation to-day, and in that discourse whereon I before touched, you have, in my poor opinion, far too roughly handled. Wherefore you speak contemptibly of his parts I know not; but I suspect that you are not free from the error common to studious and speculative men. Because Oliver was an ungraceful orator, and never said, either in public or private, anything memorable, you will have it that he was of a mean capacity. Sure this is unjust. Many men have there been ignorant of letters, without wit, without eloquence, who yet had the wisdom to devise, and the courage to perform, that which they lacked language to explain. Such men, often, in troubled times, have worked out the deliverance of nations and their own greatness, not by logic, not by rhetoric, but by wariness in success, by calmness in danger, by fierce and stubborn resolution in all adversity. The hearts of men are their books; events are their tutors; great actions are their eloquence; and such an one, in my judgment, was his late Highness, who, if none were to treat his name scornfully now who shook not at the sound of it while he lived, would, by very few, be mentioned otherwise than with reverence. His own deeds shall avouch him for a great statesman, a great soldier, a true lover of his country, a merciful and generous conqueror.

"For his faults, let us reflect that they who seem to lead are oftentimes most constrained to follow. They who will mix with men, and specially they who will govern them, must, in many things, obey them. They who will yield to no such conditions may be hermits, but cannot be generals and statesmen. If a man will walk straight forward without turning to the right or the left, he must walk in a desert, and not in Cheapside. Thus was he enforced to do many things which jumped not with his inclination nor made for his honor; because the army, on which alone he could depend for power and life, might not otherwise be contented. And I, for mine own part, marvel less that he sometimes was fain to indulge their violence than that he could so often restrain it.

"In that he dissolved the Parliament, I praise him. It then was so diminished in numbers, as well by the death as by the exclusion of members, that it was no longer the same assembly; and, if at that time it had made itself perpetual, we should have been governed, not by an English House of Commons, but by a Venetian Council.

"If in his following rule he overstepped the laws, I pity rather than condemn him. He may be compared to that Mæandrius of Samos, of whom Herodotus saith, in his Thalia, that, wishing to be of all men the most just, he was not able; for after the death of Polycrates he offered freedom to the people; and not till certain of them threatened to call him to a reckoning for what he had formerly done, did he change his purpose, and make himself a tyrant, lest he should be treated as a criminal.

"Such was the case of Oliver. He gave to his country a form of government so free and admirable that, in near six thousand years, human wisdom hath never devised any more excellent contrivance for human happiness. To himself he reserved so little power that it would scarcely have sufficed for his safety, and it is a marvel that it could suffice for his ambition. When, after that, he found that the members of his Parliament disputed his right even to that small authority which he had kept, when he might have kept all, then indeed I own that he began to govern by the sword those who would not suffer him to govern by the law.

"But, for the rest, what sovereign was ever more princely in pardoning injuries, in conquering enemies, in extending the dominions and the renown of his people? What sea, what shore did he not mark with imperishable memorials of his friendship or his vengeance? The gold of Spain, the steel of Sweden, the ten thousand sails of Holland, availed nothing against him. While every foreign state trembled at our arms, we sat secure from all assault. War, which often so strangely troubles both husbandry and commerce, never silenced the song of our reapers, or the sound of our looms. Justice was equally administered; God was freely worshipped.

"Now look at that which we have taken in exchange. With the restored King have come over to us vices of every sort, and most the basest and most shameful, — lust without love — servitude without loyalty — foulness of speech — dishonesty of dealing — grinning contempt of all things good and generous. The throne is surrounded by men whom the former Charles would have spurned from his footstool. The altar is served by slaves whose knees are supple to every being but God. Rhymers, whose books the hangman should burn, pandars, actors, and buffoons, these drink a health and throw a main with the King; these have stars on their breasts and gold sticks in their hands; these shut out from his presence the best and bravest of those who bled for his house. Even so doth God visit those who know not how to value freedom. He gives them over to the tyranny which they have desired, Ἵνα πάντες ἐπαύρωνται βασιλῆος."

"I will not," said Mr. Cowley, "dispute with you on this argument. But, if it be as you say, how can you maintain that England hath been so greatly advantaged by the rebellion?"

"Understand me rightly, Sir," said Mr. Milton. "This nation is not given over to slavery and vice. We tasted indeed the fruits of liberty before they had well ripened. Their flavor was harsh and bitter; and we turned from them with loathing to the sweeter poisons of servitude. This is but for a time. England is sleeping on the lap of Delilah, traitorously chained, but not yet shorn of strength. Let the cry be once heard, 'The Philistines be upon thee,' and at once that sleep will be broken, and those chains will be as flax in the fire. The great Parliament hath left behind it in our hearts and minds a hatred of tyrants, a just knowledge of our rights, a scorn of vain and deluding names; and that the revellers of Whitehall shall surely find. The sun is darkened; but it is only for a moment; it is but an eclipse; though all birds of evil omen have begun to scream, and all ravenous beasts have gone forth to prey, thinking it to be midnight. Woe to them if they be abroad, when the rays again shine forth!

"The King hath judged ill. Had he been wise he would have remembered that he owed his restoration only to confusions which had wearied us out, and made us eager for repose. He would have known that the folly and perfidy of a prince would restore to the good old cause many hearts which had been alienated thence by the turbulence of factions; for, if I know aught of history, or of the heart of man, he will soon learn that the last champion of the people was not destroyed when he murdered Vane, nor seduced when he beguiled Fairfax."

Mr. Cowley seemed to me not to take much amiss what Mr. Milton had said touching that thankless court, which had indeed but poorly requited his own good service. He only said, therefore, "Another rebellion! Alas! alas! Mr. Milton! If there be no choice but between despotism and anarchy, I prefer despotism."

"Many men," said Mr. Milton, "have floridly and ingeniously compared anarchy and despotism; but they who so amuse themselves do but look at separate parts of that which is truly one great whole. Each is the cause and the effect of the other; the evils of either are the evils of both. Thus do states move on in the same eternal cycle, which, from the remotest point, brings them back again to the same sad starting-post; and, till both those who govern and those who obey shall learn and mark this great truth, men can expect little through the future, as they have known little through the past, save vicissitudes of extreme evils, alternately producing and produced.

"When will rulers learn that, where liberty is not, security and order can never be? We talk of absolute power; but all power hath limits, which, if not fixed by the moderation of the governors, will be fixed by the force of the governed. Sovereigns may send their opposers to dungeons; they may clear out a senate house with soldiers; they may enlist armies of spies; they may hang scores of the disaffected in chains at every cross-road; but what power shall stand in that frightful time when rebellion hath become a less evil than endurance? Who shall dissolve that terrible tribunal, which, in the hearts of the oppressed, denounces against the oppressor the doom of its wild justice? Who shall repeal the law of self-defence? What arms or discipline shall resist the strength of famine and despair? How often were the ancient Cæsars dragged from their golden palaces, stripped of their purple robes, mangled, stoned, defiled with filth, pierced with hooks, hurled into Tiber? How often have the Eastern Sultans perished by the sabres of their own janissaries, or the bowstrings of their own mutes! For no power which is not limited by laws can ever be protected by them. Small, therefore, is the wisdom of those who would fly to servitude as if it were a refuge from commotion; for anarchy is the sure consequence of tyranny. That governments may be safe, nations must be free. Their passions must have an outlet provided, lest they make one.

"When I was at Naples, I went with Signor Manso, a gentleman of excellent parts and breeding, who had been the familiar friend of that famous poet, Torquato Tasso, to see the burning mountain Vesuvius. I wondered how the peasants could venture to dwell so fearlessly and cheerfully on its sides, when the lava was flowing from its summit; but Manso smiled, and told me that when the fire descends freely they retreat before it without haste or fear. They can tell how fast it will move, and how far; and they know, moreover, that, though it may work some little damage, it will soon cover the fields over which it hath passed with rich vineyards and sweet flowers. But, when the flames are pent up in the mountain, then it is that they have reason to fear; then it is that the earth sinks and the sea swells; then cities are swallowed up; and their place knoweth them no more. So it is in politics: where the people is most closely restrained, there it gives the greatest shocks to peace and order; therefore would I say to all kings, let your demagogues lead crowds, lest they lead armies; let them bluster, lest they massacre; a little turbulence is, as it were, the rainbow of the state; it shows indeed that there is a passing shower; but it is a pledge that there shall be no deluge."

"This is true," said Mr. Cowley; "yet these admonitions are not less needful to subjects than to sovereigns."

"Surely," said Mr. Milton; "and, that I may end this long debate with a few words in which we shall both agree, I hold that, as freedom is the only safeguard of governments, so are order and moderation generally necessary to preserve freedom. Even the vainest opinions of men are not to be outraged by those who propose to themselves the happiness of men for their end, and who must work with the passions of men for their means. The blind reverence for things ancient is indeed so foolish that it might make a wise man laugh, if it were not also sometimes so mischievous that it would rather make a good man weep. Yet, since it may not be wholly cured, it must be discreetly indulged; and therefore those who would amend evil laws should consider rather how much it may be safe to spare, than how much it may be possible to change. Have you not heard that men who have been shut up for many years in dungeons shrink if they see the light, and fall down if their irons be struck off? And so, when nations have long been in the house of bondage, the chains which have crippled them are necessary to support them, the darkness which hath weakened their sight is necessary to preserve it. Therefore release them not too rashly, lest they curse their freedom and pine for their prison.

"I think indeed that the renowned Parliament, of which we have talked so much, did show, until it became subject to the soldiers, a singular and admirable moderation, in such times scarcely to be hoped, and most worthy to be an example to all that shall come after. But on this argument I have said enough: and I will therefore only pray to Almighty God that those who shall, in future times, stand forth in defence of our liberties, as well civil as religious, may adorn the good cause by mercy, prudence, and soberness, to the glory of his name and the happiness and honor of the English people."

And so ended that discourse; and not long after we were set on shore again at the Temple Gardens, and there parted company; and the same evening I took notes of what had been said, which I have here more fully set down, from regard both to the fame of the men, and the importance of the subject-matter.

A PROPHETIC ACCOUNT OF A GRAND NATIONAL EPIC POEM, TO BE ENTITLED THE WELLINGTONIAD, AND TO BE PUBLISHED A. D. 2824

Knight's Quarterly Magazine, November, 1824

How I became a prophet it is not very important to the reader to know. Nevertheless, I feel all the anxiety which, under similar circumstances, troubled the sensitive mind of Sidrophel! and, like him, am eager to vindicate myself from the suspicion of having practised forbidden arts, or held intercourse with beings of another world. I solemnly declare, therefore, that I never saw a ghost, like Lord Lyttleton; consulted a gypsy, like Josephine; or heard my name pronounced by an absent person, like Dr. Johnson. Though it is now almost as usual for gentlemen to appear at the moment of their death to their friends as to call on them during their life, none of my acquaintance have been so polite as to pay me that customary attention. I have derived my knowledge neither from the dead nor from the living; neither from the lines of a hand, nor from the grounds of a teacup; neither from the stars of the firmament, nor from the fiends of the abyss. I have never, like the Wesley family, heard "that mighty leading angel," who "drew after him the third part of heaven's sons," scratching in my cupboard. I have never been enticed to sign any of those delusive bonds which have been the ruin of so many poor creatures; and, having always been an indifferent horseman, I have been careful not to venture myself on a broomstick.

My insight into futurity, like that of George Fox the

Quaker, and that of our great and philosophic poet, Lord Byron, is derived from simple presentiment. This is a far less artificial process than those which are employed by some others. Yet my predictions will, I believe, be found more correct than theirs, or, at all events, as Sir Benjamin Backbite says in the play, " more circumstantial."

I prophesy, then, that, in the year 2824, according to our present reckoning, a grand national Epic Poem, worthy to be compared with the Iliad, the Æneid, or the Jerusalem, will be published in London.

Men naturally take an interest in the adventures of every eminent writer. I will, therefore, gratify the laudable curiosity, which, on this occasion, will doubtless be universal, by prefixing to my account of the poem a concise memoir of the poet.

Richard Quongti will be born at Westminster on the first of July, 2786. He will be the younger son of the younger branch of one of the most respectable families in England. He will be lineally descended from Quongti, the famous Chinese liberal, who, after the failure of the heroic attempt of his party to obtain a constitution from the Emperor Fim Fam, will take refuge in England, in the twenty-third century. Here his descendants will obtain considerable note ; and one branch of the family will be raised to the peerage.

Richard, however, though destined to exalt his family to distinction far nobler than any which wealth or titles can bestow, will be born to a very scanty fortune. He will display in his early youth such striking talents as will attract the notice of Viscount Quongti, his third cousin, then Secretary of State for the Steam Department. At the expense of this eminent nobleman, he will be sent to prosecute his studies at the University of Tombuctoo. To that illustrious seat of the Muses all the ingenuous youth of every country will then be attracted by the high scientific character of Professor Quashaboo, and the eminent literary attainments of Professor Kissey Kickey. In spite of this formidable competition, however, Quongti will acquire the highest honors in every department of knowledge, and will obtain the esteem of his associates by his amiable and unaffected manners. The guardians of the young Duke of Carrington, premier peer of England, and the last remaining scion of the ancient and illustrious House of Smith, will be desirous to secure so able an instructor for their ward. With the Duke, Quongti will perform the grand tour, and visit the polished courts of Sydney and Cape Town. After prevailing on his pupil, with great difficulty, to subdue a violent and imprudent passion which he had conceived for a Hottentot lady, of great beauty and accomplishments indeed, but of dubious character, he will travel with him to the United States of America. But that tremendous war which will be fatal to American liberty will, at that time, be raging through the whole federation. At New York the travellers will hear of the final defeat and death of the illustrious champion of freedom, Jonathan Higginbottom, and of the elevation of Ebenezer Hogsflesh to the perpetual Presidency. They will not choose to proceed in a journey which would expose them to the insults of that brutal soldiery, whose cruelty and rapacity will have devastated Mexico and Columbia, and now, at length, enslaved their own country.

On their return to England, A. D. 2810, the death of the Duke will compel his preceptor to seek for a subsistence by literary labors. His fame will be raised by many small productions of considerable merit; and he will at last obtain a permanent place in the highest class of writers by his great epic poem.

This celebrated work will become, with unexampled rapidity, a popular favorite. The sale will be so beneficial to the author that, instead of going about the dirty streets on his velocipede, he will be enabled to set up his balloon.

The character of this noble poem will be so finely and justly given in the Tombuctoo Review for April, 2825, that I cannot refrain from translating the passage. The author will be our poet's old preceptor, Professor Kissey Kickey: —

" In pathos, in splendor of language, in sweetness of versification, Mr. Quongti has long been considered as unrivalled. In his exquisite poem on the Ornithorynchus Paradoxus all these qualities are displayed in their greatest perfection. How exquisitely does that work arrest and embody the undefined and vague shadows which flit over an imaginative mind. The cold worldling may not comprehend it; but it will find a response in the bosom of every youthful poet, of every enthusiastic lover, who has seen an Ornithorynchus Paradoxus by moonlight. But we were yet to learn that he possessed the comprehension, the judgment, and the fertility of mind indispensable to the epic poet.

" It is difficult to conceive a plot more perfect than that of the Wellingtoniad. It is most faithful to the manners of the age to which it relates. It preserves exactly all the historical circumstances, and interweaves them most artfully with all the *speciosa miracula* of supernatural agency."

Thus far the learned Professor of Humanity in the university of Tombuctoo. I fear that the critics of our time will form an opinion, diametrically opposite as to these very points. Some will, I fear, be disgusted by the machinery, which is derived from the mythology of ancient Greece. I can only say that, in the twenty-ninth century, that machinery will be universally in use among poets; and that Quongti will use it partly in conformity with the general practice, and partly from a veneration, perhaps excessive, for the great remains of classical antiquity, which will then, as now, be assiduously read by every man of education; though Tom Moore's songs will be forgotten, and only three copies of Lord Byron's works will exist: one in the possession of King George the Nineteenth, one in the Duke of Carrington's collection, and one in the Library of the British Museum. Finally, should any good people be concerned to hear that Pagan fictions will so long retain their influence over literature, let them reflect that, as the Bishop of St. David's says in his Proofs of the Inspiration of the Sibylline Verses, read at the last meeting of the Royal Society of Literature, "at all events a Pagan is not a Papist."

Some readers of the present day may think that Quongti is by no means entitled to the compliments which his Negro critic pays him on his adherence to the historical circumstances of the time in which he has chosen his subject; that, where he introduces any trait of our manners, it is in the wrong place, and that he confounds the customs of our age with those of much more remote periods. I can only say that the charge is infinitely more applicable to Homer, Virgil, and Tasso. If, therefore, the reader should detect, in the following abstract of the plot, any little deviation from strict historical accuracy, let him reflect for a moment, whether Agamemnon would not have found as much to censure in the Iliad, — Dido in the Æneid, — or Godfrey in the Jerusalem. Let him not suffer his opinions to depend on circumstances which cannot possibly affect the truth or falsehood of the representation. If it be impossible for a single man to kill hundreds in battle, the impossibility is not diminished by distance of time. If it be as certain that Rinaldo never disenchanted a forest in Palestine as it is that the Duke of Wellington never disenchanted the forest of Soignies, can we, as rational men, tolerate the one story and ridicule the other? Of this, at least, I am certain, that whatever excuse we have for admiring the plots of those famous poems our children will have for extolling that of the Wellingtoniad.

I shall proceed to give a sketch of the narrative. The subject is The Reign of the Hundred Days.

BOOK I.

The poem commences, in form, with a solemn proposition of the subject. Then the muse is invoked to give the poet accurate information as to the causes of so terrible a commotion. The answer to this question, being, it is to be supposed, the joint production of the poet and the muse, ascribes the event to circumstances which have hitherto eluded all the research of political writers, namely, the influence of the god Mars, who, we are told, had some forty years before usurped the conjugal rights of old Carlo Buonaparte, and given birth to Napoleon. By his incitement it was that the emperor with his devoted companions was now on the sea, returning to his ancient dominions. The gods were at present, fortunately for the adventurer, feasting with the Ethiopians, whose entertainments, according to the ancient custom described by Homer, they annually attended, with the same sort of condescending gluttony which now carries the cabinet to Guildhall on the ninth of November. Neptune was, in consequence, absent and unable to prevent the enemy of his favorite island from crossing his element. Boreas, however, who had his abode on the banks of the Russian ocean, and who, like Thetis in the Iliad, was not of sufficient quality to have an invitation to Ethiopia, resolves to destroy the armament which brings war and danger to his beloved Alexander. He accordingly raises a storm which is most powerfully described. Napoleon bewails the inglorious fate for which he seems to be reserved. "Oh! thrice happy," says he, "those who were frozen to death at Krasnoi, or slaughtered at Leipzic. Oh, Kutusoff, bravest of the Russians, wherefore was I not permitted to fall by thy victorious sword?" He then offers a prayer to Æolus, and vows to him a sacrifice of a black ram. In consequence, the god recalls his turbulent subject; the sea is calmed; and the ship anchors in the port of Frejus. Napoleon and Bertrand, who is always called the faithful Bertrand, land to explore the country; Mars meets them disguised as a lancer of the guard, wearing the cross of the Legion of Honor. He advises them to apply for necessaries of all kinds to the governor, shows them the way, and disappears with a strong smell of gunpowder. Napoleon makes a pathetic speech, and enters the governor's house. Here he sees hanging up a fine print of the battle of Austerlitz, himself in the foreground giving his orders. This puts him in high spirits; he advances and salutes the governor, who receives him most loyally, gives him an entertainment, and, according to the usage of all epic hosts, insists after dinner on a full narration of all that has happened to him since the battle of Leipzic.

BOOK II.

Napoleon carries his narrative from the battle of Leipzic to his abdication. But, as we shall have a great quantity of fighting on our hands, I think it best to omit the details.

BOOK III.

Napoleon describes his sojourn at Elba, and his return; how he was driven by stress of weather to Sardinia, and fought with the harpies there; how he was then carried southward to Sicily, where he generously took on board an English sailor, whom a man-of-war had unhappily left there, and who was in imminent danger of being devoured by the Cyclops; how he landed in the Bay of Naples, saw the Sibyl, and descended to Tartarus; how he held a long and pathetic conversation with Poniatowski, whom he found wandering unburied on the banks of Styx; how he swore to give him a splendid funeral; how he had also an affectionate interview with Desaix; how Moreau and Sir Ralph Abercrombie fled at the sight of him. He relates that he then reëmbarked, and met with nothing of importance till the commencement of the storm with which the poem opens.

BOOK IV.

The scene changes to Paris. Fame, in the garb of an express, brings intelligence of the landing of Napoleon. The king performs a sacrifice: but the entrails are unfavorable; and the victim is without a heart. He prepares to encounter the invader. A young captain of the guard, — the son of Marie Antoinette by Apollo, — in the shape of a fiddler, rushes in to tell him that Napoleon is approaching with a vast army. The royal forces are drawn out for battle. Full catalogues are given of the regiments on both sides; their colonels, lieutenant-colonels, and uniform.

BOOK V.

The king comes forward and defies Napoleon to single combat. Napoleon accepts it. Sacrifices are offered. The ground is measured by Ney and Macdonald. The combatants advance. Louis snaps his pistol in vain. The bullet of Napoleon, on the contrary, carries off the tip of the king's ear. Napoleon then rushes on him sword in hand. But Louis snatches up a stone, such as ten men of those degenerate days will be unable to move, and hurls it at his antagonist. Mars averts it. Napoleon then seizes Louis, and is about to strike a fatal blow, when Bacchus intervenes, like Venus in the third book of the Iliad, bears off the king in a thick cloud, and seats him in an hotel at Lille, with a bottle of Maraschino and a basin of soup before him. Both armies instantly proclaim Napoleon emperor.

BOOK VI.

Neptune, returned from his Ethiopian revels, sees with rage the events which have taken place in Europe. He flies to the cave of Alecto, and drags out the fiend, commanding her to excite universal hostility against Napoleon. The Fury repairs to Lord Castlereagh; and, as, when she visited Turnus, she assumed the form of an old woman, she here appears in the kindred shape of Mr.

Vansittart, and in an impassioned address exhorts his lordship to war. His lordship, like Turnus, treats this unwonted monitor with great disrespect, tells him that he is an old doting fool, and advises him to look after the ways and means, and leave questions of peace and war to his betters. The Fury then displays all her terrors. The neat powdered hair bristles up into snakes; the black stockings appear clotted with blood; and, brandishing a torch, she announces her name and mission. Lord Castlereagh, seized with fury, flies instantly to the Parliament, and recommends war with a torrent of eloquent invective. All the members instantly clamor for vengeance, seize their arms which are hanging round the walls of the House, and rush forth to prepare for instant hostilities.

BOOK VII.

In this book intelligence arrives at London of the flight of the Duchess d'Angoulême from France. It is stated that this heroine, armed from head to foot, defended Bordeaux against the adherents of Napoleon, and that she fought hand to hand with Clausel, and beat him down with an enormous stone. Deserted by her followers, she at last, like Turnus, plunged, armed as she was, into the Garonne, and swam to an English ship which lay off the coast. This intelligence yet more inflames the English to war.

A yet bolder flight than any which has been mentioned follows. The Duke of Wellington goes to take leave of the duchess; and a scene passes quite equal to the famous interview of Hector and Andromache. Lord Douro is frightened at his father's feather, but begs for his epaulette.

BOOK VIII.

Neptune, trembling for the event of the war, implores Venus, who, as the offspring of his element, naturally venerates him, to procure from Vulcan a deadly sword and a pair of unerring pistols for the Duke. They are accordingly made, and superbly decorated. The sheath of the sword, like the shield of Achilles, is carved, in exquisitely fine miniature, with scenes from the common life of the period: a dance at Almack's, a boxing match at the Fives-court, a lord mayor's procession, and a man hanging. All these are fully and elegantly described. The Duke thus armed hastens to Brussels.

BOOK IX.

The Duke is received at Brussels by the King of the Netherlands with great magnificence. He is informed of the approach of the armies of all the confederate kings. The poet, however, with a laudable zeal for the glory of his country, completely passes over the exploits of the Austrians in Italy, and the discussions of the congress. England and France, Wellington and Napoleon, almost exclusively occupy his attention. Several days are spent at Brussels in revelry. The English heroes astonish their allies by exhibiting splendid games, similar to those which draw the flower of the British aristocracy to Newmarket and Moulsey Hurst, and which will be considered by our descendants with as much veneration as the Olympian and Isthmian contests by classical students of the present time. In the combat of the cestus, Shaw, the life-guardsman, vanquishes the Prince of Orange, and obtains a bull as a prize. In the horse race, the Duke of Wellington and Lord Uxbridge ride against each other; the Duke is victorious, and is rewarded with twelve opera girls. On the last day of the festivities, a splendid dance takes place, at which all the heroes attend.

BOOK X.

Mars, seeing the English army thus inactive, hastens to rouse Napoleon, who, conducted by Night and Silence, unexpectedly attacks the Prussians. The slaughter is immense. Napoleon kills many whose histories and families are happily particularized. He slays Herman, the craniologist, who dwelt by the linden-shadowed Elbe, and measured with his eye the skulls of all who walked through the streets of Berlin. Alas! his own skull is now cleft by the Corsican sword. Four pupils of the University of Jena advance together to encounter the Emperor; at four blows he destroys them all. Blücher rushes to arrest the devastation; Napoleon strikes him to the ground, and is on the point of killing him, but Gneisenau, Ziethen, Bülow, and all the other heroes of the Prussian army, gather round him, and bear the venerable chief to a distance from the field. The slaughter is continued till night. In the meantime Neptune has dispatched Fame to bear the intelligence to the Duke, who is dancing at Brussels. The whole army is put in motion. The Duke of Brunswick's horse speaks to admonish him of his danger, but in vain.

BOOK XI.

Picton, the Duke of Brunswick, and the Prince of Orange, engage Ney at Quatre Bras. Ney kills the Duke of Brunswick, and strips him, sending his belt to Napoleon. The English fall back on Waterloo. Jupiter calls a council of the gods, and commands that none shall interfere on either side. Mars and Neptune make very eloquent speeches. The battle of Waterloo commences. Napoleon kills Picton and Delancy. Ney engages Ponsonby and kills him. The Prince of Orange is wounded by Soult. Lord Uxbridge flies to check the carnage. He is severely wounded by Napoleon, and only saved by the assistance of Lord Hill. In the meantime the Duke makes a tremendous carnage among the French. He encounters General Duhesme and vanquishes him, but spares his life. He kills Toubert, who kept the gaming house in the Palais Royal, and Maronet, who loved to spend whole nights in drinking champagne. Clerval, who had been hooted from the stage, and had then become a captain in the Imperial Guard, wished that he had still continued to face the more harmless enmity of the Parisian pit. But Larrey, the son of Æsculapius, whom his father had instructed in all the secrets of his art, and who was surgeon-general of the French army, embraced the knees of the destroyer, and conjured him not to give death to one whose office it was to give life. The Duke raised him, and bade him live.

But we must hasten to the close. Napoleon rushes to encounter Wellington. Both armies stand in mute amaze. The heroes fire their pistols; that of Napoleon misses, but that of Wellington, formed by the hand of Vulcan, and primed by the Cyclops, wounds the Emperor in the thigh. He flies, and takes refuge among his troops. The flight becomes promiscuous. The arrival of the Prussians, from a motive of patriotism, the poet completely passes over.

BOOK XII.

Things are now hastening to the catastrophe. Napoleon flies to London, and, seating himself on the hearth of the Regent, embraces the household gods, and conjures him, by the venerable age of George the Third, and by the opening perfections of the Princess Charlotte, to spare him. The Prince is inclined to do so; when, looking on his breast, he sees there the belt of the Duke of Brunswick. He instantly draws his sword, and is about to stab the destroyer of his kinsman. Piety and hospitality, however, restrain his hand. He takes a middle course, and condemns Napoleon to be exposed on a desert island. The King of France reënters Paris; and the poem concludes.

LETTERS

[The following letters have been selected from those preserved in Trevelyan's The Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay,[1] supplemented by others printed in Selection from the Correspondence of the late Macvey Napier, esq., and Correspondence of Henry Taylor. The main purpose of the selection is to give Macaulay's comments on his writings for the Edinburgh Review, and incidentally to illustrate his career as hinted at in his letters to his family and friends. It would, besides, be an insufficient exhibition of his great gifts as an author if his Complete Writings did not also include a generous example of his art as a letter-writer. The editor has supplied merely such connecting links and brief notes[2] as seem to be required to keep the reader informed of the successive steps in Macaulay's career. Macaulay was born October 25, 1800, was at a school kept by Rev. Mr. Preston at Little Shelford, near Cambridge, and in 1818 went to Trinity College, Cambridge. His father was Zachary Macaulay, a strong anti-slavery man of the school of Wilberforce, and a supporter of the evangelical party in the Church of England.]

TO ZACHARY MACAULAY

SHELFORD, February 22d, 1813.

MY DEAR PAPA, — As this is a whole holiday, I cannot find a better time for answering your letter. With respect to my health, I am very well, and tolerably cheerful, as Blundell, the best and most clever of all the scholars, is very kind, and talks to me, and takes my part. He is quite a friend of Mr. Preston's. The other boys, especially Lyon, a Scotch boy, and Wilberforce, are very good-natured, and we might have gone on very well had not one ——, a Bristol fellow, come here. He is unanimously allowed to be a queer fellow, and is generally characterized as a foolish boy, and by most of us as an ill-natured one. In my learning I do Xenophon every day, and twice a week the Odyssey, in which I am classed with Wilberforce, whom all the boys allow to be very clever, very droll, and very impudent. We do Latin verses twice a week, and I have not yet been laughed at, as Wilberforce is the only one who hears them, being in my class. We are exercised also once a week in English composition, and once in Latin composition, and letters of persons renowned in history to each other. We get by heart Greek grammar or Virgil every evening. As for sermon-writing, I have hitherto got off with credit, and I hope I shall keep up my reputation. We have had the first meeting of our debating society the other day, when a vote of censure was moved for upon Wilberforce; but he, getting up, said, "Mr. President, I beg to second the motion." By this means he escaped. The kindness which Mr. Preston shows me is very great. He always assists me in what I cannot do, and takes me to walk out with him every now and then. My room is a delightful, snug little chamber, which nobody can enter, as there is a trick about opening the door. I sit like a king, with my writing-desk before me; for (would you believe it?) there is a writing-desk in my chest of drawers; my books on one side, my box of papers on the other, with my armchair and my candle; for every boy has a candlestick, snuffers, and extinguisher of his own. Being pressed for room, I will conclude what I have to say to-morrow, and ever remain your affectionate son,

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[1] By courtesy of Messrs. Harper & Brothers.

[2] [These passages and notes are in brackets.]

THOMAS B. MACAULAY.

TO MRS. MACAULAY

SHELFORD, April 20th, 1813.

MY DEAR MAMA, — Pursuant to my promise, I resume my pen to write to you with the greatest pleasure. Since

I wrote to you yesterday, I have enjoyed myself more than I have ever done since I came to Shelford. Mr. Hodson called about twelve o'clock yesterday morning with a pony for me, and took me with him to Cambridge. How surprised and delighted was I to learn that I was to take a bed at Queen's College in Dean Milner's apartments! Wilberforce arrived soon after, and I spent the day very agreeably, the dean amusing me with the greatest kindness. I slept there, and came home on horseback to-day just in time for dinner. The dean has invited me to come again, and Mr. Preston has given his consent. The books which I am at present employed in reading to myself are, in English, Plutarch's Lives, and Milner's Ecclesiastical History; in French, Fénelon's Dialogues of the Dead. I shall send you back the volumes of Madame de Genlis's *petits romans* as soon as possible, and I should be very much obliged for one or two more of them. Everything now seems to feel the influence of spring. The trees are all out. The lilacs are in bloom. The days are long, and I feel that I should be happy were it not that I want home. Even yesterday, when I felt more real satisfaction than I have done for almost three months, I could not help feeling a sort of uneasiness, which indeed I have always felt more or less since I have been here, and which is the only thing that hinders me from being perfectly happy. This day two months will put a period to my uneasiness.

> "Fly fast the hours, and dawn th' expected morn."

Every night when I lie down I reflect that another day is cut off from the tiresome time of absence.

Your affectionate son,

THOMAS B. MACAULAY.

TO ZACHARY MACAULAY

SHELFORD, April 26th, 1813.

MY DEAR PAPA, — Since I have given you a detail of weekly duties, I hope you will be pleased to be informed of my Sunday's occupations. It is quite a day of rest here, and I really look to it with pleasure through the whole of the week. After breakfast we learn a chapter in the Greek Testament, that is, with the aid of our Bibles, and without doing it with a dictionary, like other lessons. We then go to church. We dine almost as soon as we come back, and we are left to ourselves till afternoon church. During this time I employ myself in reading, and Mr. Preston lends me any books for which I ask him, so that I am nearly as well off in this respect as at home, except for one thing, which, though I believe it is useful, is not very pleasant — I can only ask for one book at a time, and cannot touch another till I have read it through. We then go to church, and after we come back I read as before till teatime. After tea we write out the sermon. I cannot help thinking that Mr. Preston uses all imaginable means to make us forget it, for he gives us a glass of wine each on Sunday, and on Sunday only, the very day when we want to have all our faculties awake; and some do literally go to sleep during the sermon, and look rather silly when they wake. I, however, have not fallen into this disaster.

Your affectionate son,

THOMAS B. MACAULAY.

TO MRS. MACAULAY

CAMBRIDGE, Wednesday. (Postmark, 1818.)

MY DEAR MOTHER, — King, I am absolutely certain, would take no more pupils on any account. And, even if he would, he has numerous applicants with prior claims. He has already six, who occupy him six hours in the day, and is likewise lecturer to the college. It would, however, be very easy to obtain an excellent tutor. Lefevre and Malkin are men of first-rate mathematical abilities, and both of our college. I can scarcely bear to write on mathematics or mathematicians. Oh, for words to express my abomination of that science, if a name sacred to the useful and embellishing arts may be applied to the perception and recollection of certain properties in numbers and figures! Oh, that I had to learn astrology, or demonology, or school divinity; oh, that I were to pore over Thomas Aquinas, and to adjust the relation of Entity with the two Predicaments, so that I were exempted from this miserable study! "Discipline" of the mind! Say rather starvation, confinement, torture, annihilation! But it must be. I feel myself becoming a personification of algebra, a living trigonometrical canon, a walking table of logarithms. All my perceptions of elegance and beauty gone, or at least going. By the end of the term my brain will be "as dry as the remainder biscuit after a voyage." Oh, to change Cam for Isis! But such is my destiny; and since it is so, be the pursuit contemptible, below contempt, or disgusting beyond abhorrence, I shall aim at no second place. But three years! I cannot endure the thought. I cannot bear to contemplate what I must have to undergo. Farewell, then, Homer and Sophocles and Cicero.

> "Farewell, happy fields,
> Where joy forever reigns! Hail, horrors, hail,
> Infernal world!"

How does it proceed? Milton's descriptions have been driven out of my head by such elegant expressions as the following: —

$$\text{Cos. } x = 1 - \frac{x^2}{1 \cdot 2} + \frac{x^4}{1 \cdot 2 \cdot 3 \cdot 4} - \frac{x^6}{1 \cdot 2 \cdot 3 \cdot 4 \cdot 5 \cdot 6}.$$

$$\text{Tan. } \overline{a + b} = \frac{\text{Tan. } a + \text{Tan. } b}{1 - \text{Tan. } a + \text{Tan. } b}.$$

My classics must be Woodhouse, and my amusements summing an infinite series. Farewell; and tell Selina and Jane to be thankful that it is not a necessary part of female education to get a headache daily without acquiring one practical truth or beautiful image in return. Again and with affectionate love to my father, farewell wishes your most miserable and mathematical son,

T. B. Macaulay.

TO ZACHARY MACAULAY

CAMBRIDGE, January 5th, 1820.

MY DEAR FATHER, — Nothing that gives you disquietude can give me amusement. Otherwise I should have been excessively diverted by the dialogue which you have reported with so much vivacity ; the accusation ; the predictions ; and the elegant agnomen of "the novel-reader" for which I am indebted to this incognito. I went in some amazement to Malden, Romilly, and Barlow. Their acquaintance comprehends, I will venture to say, almost every man worth knowing in the university in every field of study. They had never heard the appellation applied to me by any man. Their intimacy with me would of course prevent any person from speaking to them on the subject in an insulting manner ; for it is not usual here, whatever your unknown informant may do, for a gentleman who does not wish to be kicked downstairs to reply to a man who mentions another as his particular friend, "Do you mean the blackguard or the novel-reader?" But I am fully convinced that, had the charge prevailed to any extent, it must have reached the ears of one of those whom I interrogated. At all events, I have the consolation of not being thought a novel-reader by three or four who are entitled to judge upon the subject ; and whether their opinion be of equal value with that of this John-a-Nokes against whom I have to plead, I leave you to decide.

But stronger evidence, it seems, is behind. This gentleman was in company with me. Alas, that I should never have found out how accurate an observer was measuring my sentiments, numbering the novels which I criticised, and speculating on the probability of my being plucked. "I was familiar with all the novels whose names he had ever heard." If so frightful an accusation did not stun me at once, I might perhaps hint at the possibility that this was to be attributed almost as much to the narrowness of his reading on this subject as to the extent of mine. There are men here who are mere mathematical blocks, who plod on their eight hours a day to the honors of the Senate House; who leave the groves which witnessed the musings of Milton, of Bacon, and of Gray, without one liberal idea or elegant image, and carry with them into the world minds contracted by unmingled attention to one part of science, and memories stored only with technicalities. How often have I seen such men go forth into society for people to stare at them, and ask each other how it comes that beings so stupid in conversation, so uninformed on every subject of history, of letters, and of taste, could gain such distinction at Cambridge! It is in such circles, which, I am happy to say, I hardly know but by report, that knowledge of modern literature is called novel-reading: a commodious name, invented by ignorance and applied by envy, in the same manner as men without learning call a scholar a pedant, and men without principle call a Christian a Methodist. To me the attacks of such men are valuable as compliments. The man whose friend tells him that he is known to be extensively acquainted with elegant literature may suspect that he is flattering him; but he may feel real and secure satisfaction when some Johnian sneers at him for a novel-reader.

As to the question whether or not I am wasting time, I shall leave that for time to answer. I cannot afford to sacrifice a day every week in defence and explanation as to my habits of reading. I value, most deeply value, that solicitude which arises from your affection for me; but let it not debar me from justice and candor. Believe me ever, my dear father,

Your most affectionate son, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

CAMBRIDGE, July 26th, 1822.

MY DEAR FATHER, — I have been engaged to take two pupils for nine months of the next year. They are brothers whose father, a Mr. Stoddart, resides at Cambridge. I am to give them an hour a day each, and am to receive a hundred guineas. It gives me great pleasure to be able even in this degree to relieve you from the burden of my expenses here. I begin my tutorial labors to-morrow. My pupils are young, one being fifteen and the other thirteen years old; but I hear excellent accounts of their proficiency, and I intend to do my utmost for them. Farewell. T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

Trinity College, Cambridge, October 1st, 1824.

My dear Father, — I was elected Fellow this morning, shall be sworn in to-morrow, and hope to leave Cambridge on Tuesday for Rothley Temple.[1] The examiners speak highly of the manner in which I acquitted myself, and I have reason to believe that I stood first of the candidates.

I need not say how much I am delighted by my success, and how much I enjoy the thought of the pleasure which it will afford to you, my mother, and our other friends. Till I become a master of arts next July, the pecuniary emolument which I shall derive will not be great. For seven years from that time it will make me almost an independent man.

Malden is elected. You will take little interest in the rest of our Cambridge successes and disappointments.

Yours most affectionately, T. B. M.

[Macaulay was called to the bar, but scarcely made it a serious profession; his strongest interests were politics and literature, and with his friends at Cambridge he took an active part in the support of Knight's Quarterly Magazine.]

TO THE SAME

July 9th, 1823.

My dear Father, — I have seen the two last letters which you have sent to my mother. They have given me deep pain; but pain without remorse. I am conscious of no misconduct, and whatever uneasiness I may feel arises solely from sympathy for your distress.

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[1] [In Leicestershire, the former residence of Macaulay's aunt's husband, Thomas Babington.]

You seem to imagine that the book is edited, or principally written, by friends of mine. I thought that you had been aware that the work is conducted in London, and that my friends and myself are merely contributors, and form a very small proportion of the contributors. The manners of almost all of my acquaintances are so utterly alien from coarseness, and their morals from libertinism, that I feel assured that no objection of that nature can exist to their writings. As to my own contributions, I can only say that the Roman story was read to my mother before it was published, and would have been read to you if you had happened to be at home. Not one syllable of censure was uttered.

The essay on the Royal Society of Literature was read to you. I made the alterations which I conceived that you desired, and submitted them afterward to my mother. As to the poetry which you parallel with Little's, if anything vulgar or licentious has been written by myself, I am willing to bear the consequences. If anything of that cast has been written by my friends, I allow that a certain degree of blame attaches to me for having chosen them at least indiscreetly. If, however, a bookseller of whom we knew nothing has coupled improper productions with ours in a work over which we had no control, I cannot plead guilty to anything more than misfortune: a misfortune in which some of the most rigidly moral and religious men of my acquaintance have participated in the present instance.

I am pleading at random for a book which I never saw. I am defending the works of people most of whose names I never heard. I am therefore writing under great disadvantages. I write also in great haste. I am unable even to read over what I have written.

Affectionately yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

ROTHLEY TEMPLE, October 7th, 1824.

MY DEAR FATHER, — As to Knight's magazine, I really do not think that, considering the circumstances under which it is conducted, it can be much censured. Every magazine must contain a certain quantity of mere ballast, of no value but as it occupies space. The general tone and spirit of the work will stand a comparison, in a moral point of view, with any periodical publication not professedly religious. I will venture to say that nothing has appeared in it, at least since the first number, from the pen of any of my friends, which can offend the most fastidious. Knight is absolutely in our hands, and most desirous to gratify us all, and me in particular. When I see you in London I will mention to you a piece of secret history[1] which will show you how important our connection with this work may possibly become.

Yours affectionately, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

YORK, July 21st, 1826.

MY DEAR FATHER, — The other day as I was changing my neckcloth which my wig had disfigured, my good landlady knocked at the door of my bedroom, and told me that Mr. Smith wished to see me, and was in my room below. Of all names by which men are called, there is none which conveys a less determinate idea to the mind than that of Smith. Was he on the circuit? For I do not know half the names of my companions. Was he a special messenger from London? Was he a York attorney coming to be preyed upon, or a beggar coming to prey upon me; a barber to solicit the dressing of my wig, or a collector for the Jews' Society? Down I went, and, to my utter amazement, beheld the Smith of Smiths, Sydney Smith, alias Peter Plymley. I had forgotten his very existence till I discerned the queer contrast between his black coat and his snow-white head, and the equally curious contrast between the clerical amplitude of his person and the most unclerical wit, whim, and petulance of his eye. I shook hands with him very heartily; and on the Catholic question we immediately fell, regretted Evans, triumphed over Lord George Beresford, and abused the bishops. He then very kindly urged me to spend the time between the close of the Assizes and the commencement of the Sessions at his house; and was so hospitably pressing that I at last agreed to go thither on Saturday afternoon. He is to drive me over again into York on Monday morning. I am very well pleased at having this opportunity of becoming better acquainted with a man who, in spite of innumerable affectations and oddities, is certainly one of the wittiest and most original writers of our times.

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[1] [The commencement of his connection with the Edinburgh Review.]

Ever yours affectionately, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

BRADFORD, July 26th, 1826.

MY DEAR FATHER, — On Saturday I went to Sydney Smith's. His parish lies three or four miles out of any frequented road. He is, however, most pleasantly situated. "Fifteen years ago," said he to me, as I alighted at the gate of his shrubbery, "I was taken up in Piccadilly and set down here. There was no house, and no garden; nothing but a bare field." One service this eccentric divine has certainly rendered to the Church, — he has built the very neatest, most commodious, and most appropriate rectory that I ever saw. All its decorations are in a peculiarly clerical style, grave, simple, and Gothic. The bedchambers are excellent, and excellently fitted up; the sitting-rooms handsome; and the grounds sufficiently pretty. Tindal and Parke (not the judge, of course), two of the best lawyers, best scholars, and best men in England, were there. We passed an extremely pleasant evening, had a very good dinner, and many amusing anecdotes.

After breakfast the next morning, I walked to church with Sydney Smith. The edifice is not at all in keeping with the rectory. It is a miserable little hovel, with a wooden belfry. It was, however, well filled, and with decent people, who seemed to take very much to their pastor. I understand that he is a very respectable apothecary; and most liberal of his skill, his medicine, his soup, and his wine among the sick. He preached a very queer sermon — the former half too familiar, and the latter half too florid, but not without some ingenuity of thought and expression.

Sydney Smith brought me to York on Monday morning in time for the stagecoach which runs to Skipton. We parted with many assurances of good will. I have really taken a great liking to him. He is full of wit, humor, and shrewdness. He is not one of those show-talkers who reserve all their good things for special occasions. It seems to be his greatest luxury to keep his wife and daughters laughing for two or three hours every day. His notions of law, government, and trade are surprisingly clear and just. His misfortune is to have chosen a profession at once above him and below him. Zeal would have made him a prodigy; formality and bigotry would have made him a bishop; but he could neither rise to the duties of his order, nor stoop to its degradations.

He praised my articles in the Edinburgh Review with a warmth which I am willing to believe sincere, because he qualified his compliments with several very sensible cautions. My great danger, he said, was that of taking a tone of too much asperity and contempt in controversy. I believe that he is right, and I shall try to mend.

Ever affectionately yours, T. B. M.

TO MRS. MACAULAY

Court House, Pomfret, April 15th, 1828.

My dear Mother, — I address this epistle to you as the least undeserving of a very undeserving family. You, I think, have sent me one letter since I left London. I have nothing here to do but to write letters; and, what is not very often the case, I have members of Parliament in abundance to frank them, and abundance of matter to fill them with. My Edinburgh expedition has given me so much to say that, unless I write off some of it before I come home, I shall talk you all to death, and be voted a bore in every house which I visit. I will commence with Jeffrey himself. I had almost forgotten his person; and, indeed, I should not wonder if even now I were to forget it again. He has twenty faces, almost as unlike each other as my father's to Mr. Wilberforce's, and infinitely more unlike to each other than those of near relatives often are; infinitely more unlike, for example, than those of the two Grants. When absolutely quiescent, reading a paper, or hearing a conversation in which he takes no interest, his countenance shows no indication whatever of intellectual superiority of any kind. But as soon as he is interested, and open his eyes upon you, the change is like magic. There is a flash in his glance, a violent contortion in his frown, an exquisite humor in his sneer, and a sweetness and brilliancy in his smile, beyond anything that ever I witnessed. A person who had seen him in only one state would not know him if he saw him in another. For he has not, like Brougham, marked features which in all moods of mind remain unaltered. The mere outline of his face is insignificant. The expression is everything; and such power and variety of expression I never saw in any human countenance, not even in that of the most celebrated actors. I can conceive that Garrick may have been like him. I have seen several pictures of Garrick, none resembling another, and

I have heard Hannah More speak of the extraordinary variety of countenance by which he was distinguished, and of the unequalled radiance and penetration of his eye. The voice and delivery of Jeffrey resemble his face. He possesses considerable power of mimicry, and rarely tells a story without imitating several different accents. His familiar tone, his declamatory tone, and his pathetic tone are quite different things. Sometimes Scotch predominates in his pronunciation; sometimes it is imperceptible. Sometimes his utterance is snappish and quick to the last degree; sometimes it is remarkable for rotundity and mellowness. I can easily conceive that two people who had seen him on different days might dispute about him as the travellers in the fable disputed about the chameleon.

In one thing, as far as I observed, he is always the same; and that is the warmth of his domestic affections. Neither Mr. Wilberforce nor my uncle Babington comes up to him in this respect. The flow of his kindness is quite inexhaustible. Not five minutes pass without some fond expression or caressing gesture to his wife or his daughter. He has fitted up a study for himself; but he never goes into it. Law papers, reviews, whatever he has to write, he writes in the drawing-room or in his wife's boudoir. When he goes to other parts of the country on a retainer he takes them in the carriage with him. I do not wonder that he should be a good husband; for his wife is a very amiable woman. But I was surprised to see a man so keen and sarcastic, so much of a scoffer, pouring himself out with such simplicity and tenderness in all sorts of affectionate nonsense. Through our whole journey to Perth he kept up a sort of mock quarrel with his daughter; attacked her about novel-reading, laughed her into a pet, kissed her out of it, and laughed her into it again. She and her mother absolutely idolize him, and I do not wonder at it.

His conversation is very much like his countenance and his voice, of immense variety; sometimes plain and unpretending even to flatness; sometimes whimsically brilliant and rhetorical almost beyond the license of private discourse. He has many interesting anecdotes, and tells them very well. He is a shrewd observer; and so fastidious that I am not surprised at the awe in which many people seem to stand when in his company. Though not altogether free from affectation himself, he has a peculiar loathing for it in other people, and a great talent for discovering and exposing it. He has a particular contempt, in which I most heartily concur with him, for the *fadaises* of bluestocking literature, for the mutual flatteries of coteries, the handing about of *vers de société*, the albums, the conversaziones, and all the other nauseous trickeries of the Sewards, Hayleys, and Sothebys. I am not quite sure that he has escaped the opposite extreme, and that he is not a little too desirious to appear rather a man of the world, an active lawyer, or an easy, careless gentleman, than a distinguished writer. I must own that when Jeffrey and I were by ourselves, he talked much and very well on literary topics. His kindness and hospitality to me were, indeed, beyond description; and his wife was as pleasant and friendly as possible. I liked everything but the hours. We were never up till ten, and never retired till two hours at least after midnight. Jeffrey, indeed, never goes to bed till sleep comes on him overpoweringly, and never rises till forced up by business or hunger. He is extremely well in health; so that I could not help suspecting him of being very hypochondriac; for all his late letters to me have been filled with lamentations about his various maladies. His wife told me, when I congratulated her on his recovery, that I must not absolutely rely on all his accounts of his own diseases. I really think that he is, on the whole, the youngest-looking man of fifty that I know, at least when he is animated.

His house is magnificent. It is in Moray Place, the newest pile of buildings in the town, looking out to the

Forth on one side, and to a green garden on the other. It is really equal to the houses in Grosvenor Square. Fine, however, as is the new quarter of Edinburgh, I decidedly prefer the Old Town. There is nothing like it in the island. You have been there; but you have not seen the town: and no lady ever sees a town. It is only by walking on foot through all corners at all hours that cities can be really studied to good purpose. There is a new pillar to the memory of Lord Melville; very elegant, and very much better than the man deserved. His statue is at the top, with a wreath on the head very like a night-cap drawn over the eyes. It is impossible to look at it without being reminded of the fate which the original most richly merited. But my letter will overflow even the ample limits of a frank, if I do not conclude. I hope that you will be properly penitent for neglecting such a correspondent when you receive so long a dispatch written amidst the bellowing of justices, lawyers, criers, witnesses, prisoners, and prisoners' wives and mothers.

Ever yours affectionately, T. B. M.

[Macaulay entered the House of Commons early in 1830, sitting for Calne and representing the Whig interest under Lord Lansdowne.]

TO MACVEY NAPIER, ESQ.[1]

50 Great Ormond Street, London, January 25th, 1830.

My dear Sir, — I send off by the mail of to-day an article on Southey — too long, I fear, to meet your wishes, but as short as I could make it.

There were, by the bye, in my last article a few omissions made, of no great consequence in themselves; the longest, I think, a paragraph of twelve or fourteen lines. I should scarcely have thought this worth mentioning, as it certainly by no means exceeds the limits of that editorial prerogative which I most willingly recognize, but that the omissions seemed to me, and to one or two persons who had seen the article in its original state, to be made on a principle which, however sound in itself, does not, I think, apply to compositions of this description. The passages omitted were the most pointed and ornamented sentences in the review. Now, for high and grave works, a history, for example, or a system of political or moral philosophy, Dr. Johnson's rule — that every sentence which the writer thinks fine ought to be cut out — is excellent. But periodical works like ours, which, unless they strike at the first reading are not likely to strike at all, whose whole life is a month or two, may, I think, be allowed to be sometimes even viciously florid. Probably, in estimating the real value of any tinsel which I may put upon my articles, you and I should not materially differ. But it is not by his own taste, but by the taste of the fish, that the angler is determined in his choice of bait.

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[1] [Editor of the Edinburgh Review.]

Perhaps, after all, I am ascribing to system what is mere accident. Be assured, at all events, that what I have said is said in perfect good humor, and indicates no mutinous disposition.

The Jews are about to petition Parliament for relief from the absurd restrictions which lie on them — the last relic of the old system of intolerance. I have been applied to by some of them, in the name of the managers of the scheme, to write for them in the Edinburgh Review. I would gladly further a cause so good, and you, I think, could have no objection.

Ever yours truly, T. B. MACAULAY.

TO THE SAME

PARIS,[1] September 16th, 1830.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have just received your letter, and I cannot deny that I am much vexed at what has happened. It is not very agreeable to find that I have thrown away the labor, the not unsuccessful labor, as I thought, of a month, particularly as I have not many months of perfect leisure. This would not have happened if Brougham had notified his intentions to you earlier, as he ought, in courtesy to you, and to everybody connected with the Review, to have done. He must have known that this French question was one on which many people would be desirous to write.

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[1] [Macaulay was passing a few weeks in France, partly with a view to becoming acquainted with French society and history.]

I ought to tell you that I had scarcely reached Paris when I received a letter containing a very urgent application from a very respectable quarter. I was desired to write a sketch, in one volume, of the late Revolution here. Now, I really hesitated whether I should not make my excuses to you, and accept this proposal; not on account of the pecuniary terms, for about these I have never much troubled myself, but because I should have had ampler space for this noble subject than the Review would have afforded. I thought, however, that this would not be a fair or friendly course toward you. I accordingly told the applicants that I had promised you an article, and that I could not well write twice in one month on the same subject without repeating myself. I therefore declined, and recommended a person whom I thought quite capable of producing an attractive book on these events. To that person my correspondent has probably applied. At all events, I cannot revive the negotiation. I cannot hawk my rejected articles up and down Paternoster Row.

I am, therefore, a good deal vexed at this affair; but I am not at all surprised at it. I see all the difficulties of your situation. Indeed I have long foreseen them. I always knew that in every association, literary or political, Brougham would wish to domineer. I knew, also, that no editor of the Edinburgh Review could, without risking the ruin of the publication, resolutely oppose the demands of a man so able and powerful. It was because I was certain that he would exact submissions which I am not disposed to make that I wished last year to give up writing for the Review. I had long been meditating a retreat. I thought Jeffrey's abdication a favorable time for effecting it; not, as I hope you are well assured, from any unkind feeling toward you, but because I knew that, under any editor, mishaps such as that which has now occurred would be constantly taking place. I remember that I predicted to Jeffrey what has now come to pass almost to the letter.

My expectations have been exactly realized. The present constitution of the Edinburgh Review is this: that at whatever time Brougham may be pleased to notify his intention of writing on any subject, all previous engagements are to be considered as annulled by that notification. His language translated into plain English is this: "I must write about this French Revolution, and I will write about it. If you have told Macaulay to do it, you may tell him to let it alone. If he has written an article, he may throw it behind the grate. He would not himself have the assurance to compare his own claims with mine. I am a man who acts a prominent part in the world: he is nobody. If he must be reviewing, there is my speech about the West Indies. Set him to write a puff on that. What have people like him to do, except to eulogize people like me?" No man likes to be reminded of his inferiority in such a way, and there are some particular circumstances in this case which render the admonition more unpleasant than it would otherwise be. I know that Brougham dislikes me; and I have not the slightest doubt that he feels great pleasure in taking this subject out of my hands, and at having made me understand, as I do most clearly understand, how far my services are rated below his. I do not blame you in the least. I do not see how you could have acted otherwise. But, on the other hand, I do not see why I should make any efforts or sacrifices for a Review which lies under an intolerable dictation. Whatever my writings may be worth, it is not for want of strong solicitations and tempting offers from other quarters that I have continued to send them to the

Edinburgh Review. I adhered to the connection solely because I took pride and pleasure in it. It has now become a source of humiliation and mortification.

I again repeat, my dear sir, that I do not blame you in the least. This, however, only makes matters worse. If you had used me ill, I might complain, and might hope to be better treated another time. Unhappily, you are in a situation in which it is proper for you to do what it would be improper in me to endure. What has happened now may happen next quarter, and must happen before long, unless I altogether refrain from writing for the Review. I hope you will forgive me if I say that I feel what has passed too strongly to be inclined to expose myself to a recurrence of the same vexations.

Yours most truly, T. B. MACAULAY.

TO ZACHARY MACAULAY

PARIS, September 26th.

MY DEAR FATHER, — This news[1] has broken my heart. I am fit neither to go nor to stay. I can do nothing but sit in my room, and think of poor dear Jane's kindness and affection. When I am calmer, I will let you know my intentions. There will be neither use nor pleasure in remaining here. My present purpose, as far as I can form one, is to set off in two or three days for England, and in the meantime to see nobody, if I can help it, but Dumont, who has been very kind to me. Love to all — to all who are left me to love. We must love each other better. T. B. M.

TO MACVEY NAPIER

LONDON, October 16th, 1830.

MY DEAR SIR, — I am extremely sorry to find that my letter gave you pain. The precise expressions which I used I cannot remember. I certainly wrote in haste and warmth. Yet I must have expressed myself very ill, if I led you to think that, even in the first moment of irritation, I felt any personal resentment towards you, or that I considered my secession from the Review as a punishment — to use your own phrase. I considered it as a measure, not of punishment, but of precaution. If the whole question has been between you and me, the expressions of kindness and regret which you employed would have much more than satisfied me. But there was another person concerned — the person of all persons on earth to whose dictation I feel least inclined to stoop. Your intentions towards me, I know, are perfectly kind and fair. I have no such confidence with respect to his. I would sacrifice much to your convenience. But I cannot tell you how my whole heart and soul rise up against the thought of sacrificing anything to his love of domination.

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[1] [The death of his sister Jane.]

My reason for thinking that, in the present case, Brougham was exercising an unjustifiable dictation was a very simple one. The transaction was, as you say, and as I could not but feel, one which required very special circumstances to justify it. Now, I could see no special circumstance except Brougham's will and pleasure. Nor do I yet see any. I have been a very anxious observer of French politics. I have talked with very intelligent men on both sides of the Channel; and I solemnly declare to you that I am utterly unable to imagine how it can be a matter of necessity, or of pressing expediency, that a Whig manifesto about the late Revolution should appear before the meeting of Parliament. Of course it is desirable that just views of so important an event should be entertained throughout the country; but nobody, I believe, expects that any propositions directly relating to the changes in France will be brought forward during the next Session by any party. Brougham chose, however, to persist in his demand. That circumstance, I think, and always thought, fully justified you. His talents are not, I think, displayed to most advantage in the Edinburgh Review. But his withdrawing, and his direct hostility, which would assuredly follow his withdrawing, might do immense injury. Without disputing whether his articles are better than mine, I am sure that his secession would do you more harm than mine. These considerations seemed to me to exculpate you completely. What it might be advisable for me to do was, as I think you must allow, a very different question. I never doubted that your intentions towards me were perfectly friendly, but I thought that you would find it impossible to carry them into effect. The difficulties of your situation justified, as I could not deny, your proceedings with regard to me. But they also, I thought, justified my secession. I have no right to expect that you or any editor will risk the ruin of a Review in order to spare me a little mortification. But I have a perfect right to keep as much as I can out of all connection with a Review which can be saved from ruin only by measures mortifying to me.

Perhaps I have said more about the past than is proper in a letter of reconciliation. But reconciliation is scarcely the word. For there has been no interruption of personal kindness and esteem; and I really wished to explain clearly the principle on which I have acted. As for the future, I require no pledge. When any such case as that which has now occurred shall present itself, act as you think best for the Review. If you decide against me, I shall not, I assure you, think myself ill used, at least by you. I shall attribute whatever may happen to the extreme difficulty of your situation. On the other hand, you must not think hardly of me if I should then put into execution the purpose which I at present relinquish, — if I should, without the least anger towards you, and with real regret for any inconvenience which you may sustain, withdraw from a connection which, I sincerely assure you, has never, as far as you are personally concerned, given me anything but pleasure.

And now, my dear sir, let us finally dismiss this unpleasant topic. Yet I should wish for a few lines from you to say that the conduct which, without the least unkind or suspicious feeling towards you, and purely, as I intended, in self-defence, I have adopted on this occasion has not diminished that personal regard which I flattered myself that you felt for me, and which will, I hope, be proof against any of the occurrences which may disturb our literary connection.

A day or two after I had written to you from Paris, I heard again from Dr. Lardner, who mentioned his application to you. The rest need no longer be a secret. I have agreed to write an account of the political changes of France since the Restoration, and of this late Revolution, for his Cabinet Cyclopædia. I hoped to have finished this task by Christmas. My article on the Italian Poets must be postponed till the Spring. But I can easily find time for a short paper in the Winter Number. The Jews have been urging me to say something about their claims; and I really think that the question might be discussed, both on general and on particular grounds, in a very attractive manner. What do you think of this plan? Believe me ever, yours most truly,

T. B. MACAULAY.

TO THE SAME

LONDON, February 12th, 1831.

MY DEAR NAPIER, — People here think that I have answered Sadler completely — at least those who have spoken to me on the subject think so: and if no fault in the arithmetic can be discovered, I do not see how any doubt can exist on the matter. Empson tells me that Malthus is well pleased, which is a good sign. As to Blackwood's trash, I could not get through it. It bore the same relation to Sadler's pamphlet that a bad hash bears to a bad joint. It is too much, after being nauseated with such an odious dish, to have it served up again in such a *rifacimento*. As far as I looked at it, I saw nothing original, — nothing that was not in Sadler's pamphlet. Is it possible that such stuff can be Wilson's?

I shall not, I fear, be able to do much for the next number. But I will try to do something. I do not like to review Moore — in the first place because I am no great admirer of his hero; and in the next place, because the topic is a little hackneyed. I cannot imagine from what quarter you can have heard that I thought of reviewing Lardner's Cyclopædia. I do not remember that anybody ever mentioned it to me. Lardner, I recollect, spoke to me warmly of Herschel's treatise on Natural Philosophy, and expressed a wish that it were well reviewed. But I never dreamed that he could mean to propose it to me, who knows nothing about Natural Philosophy. It is, as far as I can judge, a very able performance; but I am a mere child in such matters. Suppose that I were to write an article on Reform, after the Ministers have developed their plan. Jeffrey, I understand, has drawn the Scotch Bill. But he is, as in duty bound, as close as Lord Burleigh himself. I think he must succeed. I do not see how he can fail. Yet he is nervous; and I am, I own, a little nervous for him. I see that the Age charges me with the article on England and France. I do not wish to pry into secrets; but I think that it is Bulwer's from internal evidence. Goldsmidt told me that the Jews want to print my article as a separate pamphlet. I told him that, if the publishers had no objection, I had none. But I declined interfering in the matter. I think his solicitude quite superfluous. The Jews cannot, I imagine, be kept out of Parliament longer. Ever yours truly,

T. B. Macaulay.

TO THOMAS FLOWER ELLIS[1]

LONDON, March 30th, 1831.

DEAR ELLIS, — I have little news for you, except what you will learn from the papers as well as from me. It is clear that the Reform Bill must pass, either in this or in another Parliament. The majority of one does not appear to me, as it does to you, by any means inauspicious. We should perhaps have had a better plea for a dissolution if the majority had been the other way. But surely a dissolution under such circumstances would have been a most alarming thing. If there should be a dissolution now, there will not be that ferocity in the public mind which there would have been if the House of Commons had refused to entertain the bill at all. I confess that, till we had a majority, I was half inclined to tremble at the storm which we had raised. At present I think that we are absolutely certain of victory, and of victory without commotion.

Such a scene as the division of last Tuesday I never saw, and never expect to see again. If I should live fifty years, the impression of it will be as fresh and sharp in my mind as if it had just taken place. It was like seeing Cæsar stabbed in the Senate House, or seeing Oliver taking the mace from the table; a sight to be seen only once, and never to be forgotten. The crowd overflowed the House in every part. When the strangers were cleared out, and the doors locked, we had six hundred and eight members present — more by fifty-five than ever were in a division before. The ayes and noes were like two volleys of cannon from opposite sides of a field of battle. When the opposition went out into the lobby,[2] an operation which took up twenty minutes or more, we spread ourselves over the benches on both sides of the House; for there were many of us who had not been able to find a seat during the evening. When the doors were shut we began to speculate on our numbers. Everybody was desponding. "We have lost it. We are only two hundred and eighty at most. I do not think we are two hundred and fifty. They are three hundred. Alderman Thompson has counted them. He says they are two hundred and ninety-nine." This was the talk on our benches. I wonder that men who have been long in Parliament do not acquire a better *coup d'œil* for numbers. The House, when only the ayes were in it, looked to me a very fair House — much fuller than it generally is even on debates of considerable interest. I had no hope, however, of three hundred. As the tellers passed along our lowest row on the left-hand side the interest was insupportable — two hundred and ninety-one — two hundred and ninety-two — we were all standing up and stretching forward, telling with the tellers. At three hundred there was a short cry of joy — at three hundred and two another — suppressed, however, in a moment; for we did not yet know what the hostile force might be. We knew, however, that we could not be severely beaten. The doors were thrown open, and in they came. Each of them, as he entered, brought some different report of their numbers. It must have been impossible, as you may conceive, in the lobby, crowded as they were, to form any exact estimate. First we heard that they were three hundred and three; then that number rose to three hundred and ten; then went down to three hundred and seven. Alexander Barry told me that he had counted, and that they were three hundred and four. We were all breathless with anxiety, when Charles Wood, who stood near the door, jumped up on a bench and cried out, "They are only three hundred and one!" We set up a shout that you might have heard to Charing Cross, waving our hats, stamping against the floor, and clapping our hands. The tellers scarcely got through the crowd; for the House was thronged up to the table, and all the floor was fluctuating with heads like the pit of a theatre. But you might have heard a pin drop as Duncannon read the numbers. Then again the shouts broke out, and many of us shed tears. I could scarcely refrain. And the jaw of Peel fell; and the face of Twiss was as the face of a damned soul; and Herries looked like Judas taking his necktie off for the last operation. We shook hands, and clapped each other on the back, and went out laughing, crying, and huzzaing into the lobby. And no sooner were the outer doors opened than another shout answered that within the House. All the passages and the stairs into the waiting-rooms were thronged by people who had waited till four in the morning to know the issue. We passed through a narrow lane between two thick masses of them; and all the way down they were shouting and waving their hats, till we got into the open air. I called a cabriolet, and the first thing the driver asked was, "Is the bill carried?" "Yes, by one." "Thank God for it, sir!" And away I rode to Gray's Inn — and so ended a scene which will probably never be equalled till the reformed Parliament wants reforming; and that I hope will not be till the days of our grandchildren, — till that truly orthodox and apostolical person, Dr. Francis Ellis, is an archbishop of eighty.

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[1] [A lawyer, who became a lifelong friend.]

[2] "The practice in the Commons, until 1836, was to send one party forth into the lobby, the other remaining in the House." (Sir T. Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice.)

As for me, I am for the present a sort of lion. My speech has set me in the front rank, if I can keep there; and it has not been my luck hitherto to lose ground when I have once got it. Sheil and I are on very civil terms. He talks largely concerning Demosthenes and Burke. He made, I must say, an excellent speech; too florid and queer, but decidedly successful.

Why did not Price speak? If he was afraid, it was not without reason; for a more terrible audience there is not in the world. I wish that Praed had known to whom he was speaking. But, with all his talent, he has no tact, and he has fared accordingly. Tierney used to say that he never rose in the House without feeling his knees tremble under him; and I am sure that no man who has not some of that feeling will ever succeed there.

Ever yours, T. B. MACAULAY.

TO HANNAH MORE MACAULAY

LONDON, May 30th, 1831.

Well, my dear, I have been to Holland House. I took a glass coach, and arrived, through a fine avenue of elms, at the great entrance toward seven o'clock. The house is delightful — the very perfection of the old Elizabethan style — a considerable number of very large and very comfortable rooms, rich with antique carving and gilding, but carpeted and furnished with all the skill of the best modern upholsterers. The library is a very long room — as long, I should think, as the gallery at Rothley Temple — with little cabinets for study branching out of it, warmly and snugly fitted up, and looking out on very beautiful grounds. The collection of books is not, like Lord Spencer's, curious; but it contains almost everything that one ever wished to read. I found nobody there when I arrived but Lord Russell, the son of the Marquess of Tavistock. We are old House of Commons friends; so we had some very pleasant talk, and in a little while in came Allen, who is warden of Dulwich College, and who lives almost entirely at Holland House. He is certainly a man of vast information and great conversational powers. Some other gentlemen dropped in, and we chatted till Lady Holland made her appearance. Lord Holland dined by himself on account of his gout. We sat down to dinner in a fine long room, the wainscot of which is rich with gilded coronets, roses, and portcullises. There were Lord Albemarle, Lord Alvanley, Lord Russell, Lord Mahon — a violent Tory, but a very agreeable companion and a very good scholar. There was Cradock, a fine fellow, who was the Duke of Wellington's aid-de-camp in 1815, and some other people whose names I did not catch. What, however, is more to the purpose, there was a most excellent dinner. I have always heard that Holland House is famous for its good cheer, and certainly the reputation is not unmerited. After dinner Lord Holland was wheeled in and placed very near me. He was extremely amusing and good-natured.

In the drawing-room I had a long talk with Lady Holland about the antiquities of the house, and about the purity of the English language, wherein she thinks herself a critic. I happened, in speaking about the Reform Bill, to say that I wished that it had been possible to form a few commercial constituencies, if the word constituency were admissible. "I am glad you put that in," said her ladyship. "I was just going to give it you. It is an odious word. Then there is *talented*, and *influential*, and *gentlemanly*. I never could break Sheridan of *gentlemanly*, though he allowed it to be wrong." We talked about the word *talents* and its history. I said that it had first appeared in theological writing, that it was a metaphor taken from the parable in the New Testament, and that it had gradually passed from the vocabulary of divinity into common use. I challenged her to find it in any classical writer on general subjects before the Restoration, or even before the year 1700. I believe that I might safely have gone down later. She seemed surprised by this theory, never having, so far as I could judge, heard of the parable of the talents. I did not tell her, though I might have done so, that a person who professes to be a critic in the delicacies of the English language ought to have the Bible at his fingers' ends.

She is certainly a woman of considerable talents and great literary acquirements. To me she was excessively gracious; yet there is a haughtiness in her courtesy which, even after all that I had heard of her, surprised me. The centurion did not keep his soldiers in better order than she keeps her guests. It is to one "Go," and he goeth; and to another "Do this," and it is done.

"Ring the bell, Mr. Macaulay." "Lay down that screen, Lord Russell; you will spoil it." "Mr. Allen, take a candle and show Mr. Cradock the picture of Bonaparte." Lord Holland is, on the other hand, all kindness, simplicity, and vivacity. He talked very well both on politics and on literature. He asked me in a very friendly manner about my father's health, and begged to be remembered to him.

When my coach came, Lady Holland made me promise that I would on the first fine morning walk out to breakfast with them and see the grounds; and, after drinking a glass of very good iced lemonade, I took my leave, much amused and pleased. The house certainly deserves its reputation for pleasantness, and her ladyship used me, I believe, as well as it is her way to use anybody. Ever yours,
T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

LONDON, June 1st, 1831.

MY DEAR SISTER, — My last letter was a dull one. I mean this to be very amusing. My last was about Basinghall Street, attorneys, and bankrupts. But for this — take it dramatically in the German style.

Fine morning. Scene, the great entrance of Holland House.
Enter MACAULAY *and* TWO FOOTMEN *in livery.*

First Footman. Sir, may I venture to demand your name?
Macaulay. Macaulay, and thereto I add M. P.
And that addition, even in these proud halls,
May well insure the bearer some respect.
Second Footman. And art thou come to breakfast with our lord?
Macaulay. I am; for so his hospitable will,
And hers — the peerless dame ye serve — hath bade.
First Footman. Ascend the stair, and thou above shalt find,
On snow-white linen spread, the luscious meal.
(*Exit* MACAULAY *upstairs.*)

In plain English prose, I went this morning to breakfast at Holland House. The day was fine, and I arrived at twenty minutes after ten. After I had lounged a short time in the dining-room, I heard a gruff, good-natured voice asking, "Where is Mr. Macaulay? Where have you put him?" and in his armchair Lord Holland was wheeled in. He took me round the apartments, he riding, and I walking. He gave me the history of the most remarkable portraits in the library, where there is, by the bye, one of the few bad pieces of Lawrence that I have seen — a head of Charles James Fox, an ignominious failure. Lord Holland said that it was the worst ever painted of so eminent a man by so eminent an artist. There is a very fine head of Machiavelli, and another of Earl Grey, a very different sort of man. I observed a portrait of Lady Holland, painted some thirty years ago. I could have cried to see the change. She must have been a most beautiful woman. She still looks, however, as if she had been handsome, and shows in one respect great taste and sense: she does not rouge at all, and her costume is not youthful, so that she looks as well in the morning as in the evening. We came back to the dining-room. Our breakfast party consisted of my lord and lady, myself, Lord Russell, and Luttrell. You must have heard of Luttrell. I met him once at Rogers's; and I have seen him, I think, in other places. He is a famous wit — the most popular, I think, of all the professed wits — a man who has lived in the highest circles, a scholar, and no contemptible poet. He wrote a little volume of verse entitled Advice to Julia — not first-rate, but neat, lively, piquant, and showing the most consummate knowledge of fashionable life.

We breakfasted on very good coffee, and very good tea, and very good eggs, butter kept in the midst of ice, and hot rolls. Lady Holland told us her dreams; how she had dreamed that a mad dog bit her foot, and how she set off to Brodie, and lost her way in St. Martin's Lane, and could not find him. She hoped, she said, the dream would not come true. I said that I had had a dream which admitted of no such hope, for I had dreamed that

I heard Pollock speak in the House of Commons, that the speech was very long, and that he was coughed down. This dream of mine diverted them much.

After breakfast Lady Holland offered to conduct me to her own drawing-room, or, rather, commanded my attendance. A very beautiful room it is, opening on a terrace, and wainscoted with miniature paintings interesting from their merit, and interesting from their history. Among them I remarked a great many — thirty I should think — which even I, who am no great connoisseur, saw at once could come from no hand but Stothard's. They were all on subjects from Lord Byron's poems. "Yes," said she; "poor Lord Byron sent them to me a short time before the separation. I sent them back, and told him that, if he gave them away, he ought to give them to Lady Byron. But he said that he would not, and that if I did not take them the bailiffs would, and that they would be lost in the wreck." Her ladyship then honored me so far as to conduct me through her dressing-room into the great family bedchamber to show me a very fine picture, by Reynolds, of Fox, when a boy, bird's-nesting. She then consigned me to Luttrell, asking him to show me the grounds.

Through the grounds we went, and very pretty I thought them. In the Dutch garden is a fine bronze bust of Napoleon, which Lord Holland put up in 1817, while Napoleon was a prisoner at St. Helena. The inscription was selected by his lordship, and is remarkably happy. It is from Homer's Odyssey. I will translate it, as well as I can extempore, into a measure which gives a better idea of Homer's manner than Pope's singsong couplet.

> "For not, be sure, within the grave
> Is hid that prince, the wise, the brave;
> But in an islet's narrow bound,
> With the great ocean roaring round,
> The captive of a foeman base,
> He pines to view his native place."

There is a seat near the spot which is called Rogers's seat. The poet loves, it seems, to sit there. A very elegant inscription by Lord Holland is placed over it: —

> "Here Rogers sat; and here forever dwell
> With me those pleasures which he sung so well."

Very neat and condensed, I think. Another inscription by Luttrell hangs there. Luttrell adjured me with mock pathos to spare his blushes; but I am author enough to know what the blushes of authors mean. So I read the lines, and very pretty and polished they were, but too many to be remembered from one reading.

Having gone round the grounds, I took my leave, very much pleased with the place. Lord Holland is extremely kind. But that is of course; for he is kindness itself. Her ladyship too, which is by no means of course, is all graciousness and civility. But, for all this, I would much rather be quietly walking with you: and the great use of going to these fine places is to learn how happy it is possible to be without them. Indeed, I care so little for them that I certainly should not have gone to-day, but that I thought that I should be able to find materials for a letter which you might like.

Farewell. T. B. MACAULAY.

TO THE SAME

LONDON, June 29th, 1831.

MY DEAR SISTER, — We are not yet in the full tide of parliamentary business. Next week the debates will be warm and long. I should not wonder if we had a discussion of five nights. I shall probably take a part in it.

I have breakfasted again with Rogers. The party was a remarkable one, — Lord John Russell, Tom Moore, Tom Campbell, and Luttrell. We were all very lively. An odd incident took place after breakfast, while we were standing at the window and looking into the Green Park. Somebody was talking about diners-out. "Aye," said Campbell —

> "'Ye diners-out from whom we guard our spoons.'"

Tom Moore asked where the line was. "Don't you know?" said Campbell. "Not I," said Moore. "Surely," said Campbell, "it is your own." "I never saw it in my life," said Moore. "It is in one of your best things in the Times," said Campbell. Moore denied it. Hereupon I put in my claim, and told them that it was mine. Do you remember it? It is in some lines called the Political Georgics, which I sent to the Times about three years ago. They made me repeat the lines, and were vociferous in praise of them. Tom Moore then said, oddly enough, "There is another poem in the Times that I should like to know the author of, A Parson's Account of his Journey to the Cambridge Election." I laid claim to that also. "That is curious," said Moore. "I begged Barnes to tell me who wrote it. He said that he had received it from Cambridge, and touched it up himself, and pretended that all the best strokes were his. I believed that he was lying, because I never knew him to make a good joke in his life. And now the murder is out." They asked me whether I had put anything else in the Times. Nothing, I said, except the Sortes Virgilianæ, which Lord John remembered well. I never mentioned the Cambridge Journey or the Georgics to any but my own family; and I was therefore, as you may conceive, not a little flattered to hear in one day Moore praising one of them, and Campbell praising the other.

I find that my article on Byron is very popular, one among a thousand proofs of the bad taste of the public. I am to review Croker's edition of Bozzy. It is wretchedly ill done. The notes are poorly written and shamefully inaccurate. There is, however, much curious information in it. The whole of The Tour to the Hebrides is incorporated with The Life. So are most of Mrs. Thrale's anecdotes, and much of Sir John Hawkins's lumbering book. The whole makes five large volumes. There is a most laughable sketch of Bozzy, taken by Sir T. Lawrence, when young. I never saw a character so thoroughly hit off. I intend the book for you when I have finished my criticism on it. You are, next to myself, the best-read Boswellite that I know. The lady whom Johnson abused for flattering him [1] was certainly, according to Croker, Hannah More. Another ill-natured sentence about a Bath lady [2] whom Johnson called "empty-headed" is also applied to your godmother. Ever yours,

T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

London, September 9th, 1831.

My dear Sister, — I scarcely know where to begin, or where to end, my story of the magnificence [3] of yesterday. No pageant can be conceived more splendid. The newspapers will happily save me the trouble of relating minute particulars. I will therefore give you an account of my own proceedings, and mention what struck me most. I rose at six. The cannon awaked me: and, as soon as I got up, I heard the bells pealing on every side from all the steeples in London. I put on my court-dress, and looked a perfect Lovelace in it. At seven the glass coach which I had ordered for myself and some of my friends came to the door. I called in Hill Street for William Marshall, M. P. for Beverley, and in Cork Street for Strutt, the member for Derby, and Hawkins, the member for Tavistock. Our party being complete, we drove through crowds of people and ranks of horse-guards in cuirasses and helmets to Westminster Hall, which we reached as the clock struck eight.

The House of Commons was crowded, and the whole assembly was in uniform. After prayers we went out in order by lot, the Speaker going last. My county, Wiltshire, was among the first drawn; so I got an excellent place in the Abbey, next to Lord Mahon, who is a very great favorite of mine, and a very amusing companion, though a bitter Tory.

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[1] See Boswell's Life of Johnson, April 15, 1778.

[2] "He would not allow me to praise a lady then at Bath, observing, 'She does not gain upon me, sir; I think her empty-headed.'"

[3] [The crowning of William the Fourth.]

Our gallery was immediately over the great altar. The whole vast avenue of lofty pillars was directly in front of us. At eleven the guns fired, the organ struck up, and the procession entered. I never saw so magnificent a scene. All down that immense vista of gloomy arches there was one blaze of scarlet and gold. First came heralds in coats stiff with embroidered lions, unicorns, and harps; then nobles bearing the regalia, with pages in rich dresses carrying their coronets on cushions; then the dean and prebendaries of Westminster in copes of cloth of gold; then a crowd of beautiful girls and women, or at least of girls and women who at a distance looked altogether beautiful, attending on the queen. Her train of purple velvet and ermine was borne by six of these fair creatures. All the great officers of state in full robes, the Duke of Wellington with his marshal's staff, the Duke of Devonshire with his white rod, Lord Grey with the sword of state, and the chancellor with his seals, came in procession. Then all the royal dukes with their trains borne behind them, and last the king leaning on two bishops. I do not, I dare say, give you the precise order. In fact, it was impossible to discern any order. The whole Abbey was one blaze of gorgeous dresses, mingled with lovely faces.

The queen behaved admirably, with wonderful grace and dignity. The king very awkwardly. The Duke of Devonshire looked as if he came to be crowned instead of his master. I never saw so princely a manner and air. The chancellor looked like Mephistopheles behind Margaret in the church. The ceremony was much too long, and some parts of it were carelessly performed. The archbishop mumbled. The Bishop of London preached, well enough indeed, but not so effectively as the occasion required; and, above all, the bearing of the king made the foolish parts of the ritual appear monstrously ridiculous, and deprived many of the better parts of their proper effect. Persons who were at a distance, perhaps, did not feel this; but I was near enough to see every turn of his finger and every glance of his eye. The moment of the crowning was extremely fine. When the archbishop placed the crown on the head of the king, the trumpets sounded, and the whole audience cried out, "God save the King!" All the peers and peeresses put on their coronets, and the blaze of splendor through the Abbey seemed to be doubled. The king was then conducted to the raised throne, where the peers successively did him homage, each of them kissing his cheek and touching the crown. Some of them were cheered, which I thought indecorous in such a place and on such an occasion. The Tories cheered the Duke of Wellington; and our people, in revenge, cheered Lord Grey and Brougham.

You will think this a very dull letter for so great a subject; but I have only had time to scrawl these lines in order to catch the post. I have not a minute to read them over. I lost yesterday, and have been forced to work to-day. Half my article on Boswell went to Edinburgh the day before yesterday. I have, though I say it who should not say it, beaten Croker black and blue. Impudent as he is, I think he must be ashamed of the pickle in which I leave him. Ever yours,

T. B. M.

TO THOMAS FLOWER ELLIS

LONDON, October 17th, 1831.

MY DEAR ELLIS, — I should have written to you before, but that I mislaid your letter and forgot your direction. When shall you be in London? Of course you do not mean to sacrifice your professional business to the work of numbering the gates and telling the towers of boroughs[1] in Wales. You will come back, I suppose, with your head full of ten-pound householders instead of ἥρωες, and of Caermarthen and Denbigh instead of Carians and Pelasgians. Is it true, by the bye, that the commissioners are whipped on the boundaries of the boroughs by the beadles, in order that they may not forget the precise line which they have drawn? I deny it wherever I go, and assure people that some of my friends who are in the commission would not submit to such degradation.

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[1] Mr. Ellis was one of the commissioners appointed to arrange the

You must have been hard-worked indeed, and soundly whipped, too, if you have suffered as much for the Reform Bill as we who debated it. I believe that there are fifty members of the House of Commons who have done irreparable injury to their health by attendance on the discussions of this session. I have got through pretty well, but I look forward, I confess, with great dismay to the thought of recommencing; particularly as Wetherell's cursed lungs seem to be in as good condition as ever.

I have every reason to be gratified by the manner in which my speeches have been received. To say the truth the station which I now hold in the House is such that I should not be inclined to quit it for any place which was not of considerable importance. What you saw about my having a place was a blunder of a stupid reporter's. Croker was taunting the Government with leaving me to fight their battle and to rally their followers; and said that the honorable and learned member for Calne, though only a practising barrister in title, seemed to be in reality the most efficient member of the Government. By the bye, my article on Croker has not only smashed his book, but has hit the Westminster Review incidentally. The Utilitarians took on themselves to praise the accuracy of the most inaccurate writer that ever lived, and gave as an instance of it a note in which, as I have shown, he makes a mistake of twenty years and more. John Mill is in a rage, and says that they are in a worse scrape than Cro-

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boundaries of parliamentary boroughs in connection with the Reform Bill.

ker; John Murray says that it is a d——d nuisance; and Croker looks across the House of Commons at me with a leer of hatred which I repay with a gracious smile of pity.

I am ashamed to have said so much about myself. But you asked for news about me. No request is so certain to be granted, or so certain to be a curse to him who makes it, as that which you have made to me. Ever yours,

T. B. Macaulay.

TO MACVEY NAPIER

London, January 9th, 1832.

Dear Napier, — I have been so much engaged by bankrupt business, as we are winding up the affairs of many estates, that I shall not be able to send off my article about Hampden till Thursday, the twelfth. It will be, I fear, more than forty pages long. As Pascal said of his eighteenth letter, I would have made it shorter if I could have kept it longer. You must indulge me, however, for I seldom offend in that way.

It is in part a narrative. This is a sort of composition which I have never yet attempted. You will tell me, I am sure with sincerity, how you think that I succeed in it. I have said as little about Lord Nugent's book as I decently could. Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

London, January 19th, 1832.

Dear Napier, — I will try the Life of Lord Burleigh, if you will tell Longman to send me the book. However bad the work may be, it will serve as a heading for an article on the times of Elizabeth. On the whole, I thought it best not to answer Croker. Almost all the little pamphlet which he published (or rather printed, for I believe it is not for sale) is made up of extracts from Blackwood; and I thought that a contest with your grog-drinking, cock-fighting, cudgel-playing professor of moral philosophy would be too degrading. I could have demolished every paragraph of the defence. Croker defended his θνητοὶ φίλοι[1] by quoting a passage of Euripides which, as every scholar knows, is corrupt; which is nonsense, and false metre if read as he reads it; and which Markland and Matthiæ have set right by a most obvious correction. But, as nobody seems to have read his vindication, we can gain nothing by refuting it.

Ever yours, T. B. MACAULAY.

TO HANNAH AND MARGARET MACAULAY

BATH, June 10th, 1832.

MY DEAR SISTERS, — Everything has gone wrong with me. The people at Calne fixed Wednesday for my reelection on taking office, — the very day on which I was to have been at a public dinner at Leeds. I shall therefore remain here till Wednesday morning, and read Indian politics in quiet. I am already deep in Zemindars, Ryots, Polygars, Courts of Phoujdary, and Courts of Nizamut Adawlut. I can tell you which of the native powers are subsidiary and which independent, and read you lectures of an hour on our diplomatic transactions at the courts of Lucknow, Nagpore, Hydrabad, and Poonah. At Poonah, indeed, I need not tell you that there is no court; for the Paishwa, as you are doubtless aware, was deposed by Lord Hastings in the Pindarree war. Am I not in fair training to be as great a bore as if I had myself been in India — that is to say, as great a bore as the greatest?

I am leading my watering-place life here: reading, writing, and walking all day; speaking to nobody but the waiter and the chambermaid; solitary in a great crowd, and content with solitude. I shall be in London again on Thursday, and shall also be an M. P. From that day you may send your letters as freely as ever; and pray do not be sparing of them. Do you read any novels at Liverpool? I should fear that the good Quakers would twitch them out of your hands, and appoint their portion in the fire. Yet probably you have some safe place, some box, some drawer with a key, wherein a marble-covered book may lie for Nancy's Sunday reading. And, if you do not read novels, what do you read! How does Schiller go on? I have sadly neglected Calderon; but whenever I have a month to spare, I shall carry my conquests far and deep into Spanish literature.

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[1] "Mr. Croker has favored us with some Greek of his own. 'At the altar,' says Dr. Johnson, 'I recommended my θ φ.' 'These letters,' says the editor (which Dr. Strahan seems not to have understood), 'probably mean θνητοὶ φίλοι, *departed friends*.' Johnson was not a first-rate Greek scholar; but he knew more Greek than most boys when they leave school; and no schoolboy could venture to use the word θνητοὶ in the sense which Mr. Croker ascribes to it without imminent danger of a flogging." (Macaulay's Review of Croker's Boswell.)

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

LONDON, July 2d, 1832.

MY DEAR SISTERS, — I am, I think, a better correspondent than you two put together. I will venture to say that I have written more letters by a good many than I have received, and this with India and the Edinburgh Review on my hands; the Life of Mirabeau to be criticised; the Rajah of Travancore to be kept in order; and the bad money, which the Emperor of the Burmese has had the impudence to send us by way of tribute, to be exchanged for better. You have nothing to do but to be good, and write. Make no excuses, for your excuses are contradictory. If you see sights, describe them; for then you have subjects. If you stay at home, write; for then you have time. Remember that I never saw the cemetery or the railroad. Be particular, above all, in your accounts of the Quakers. I enjoin this especially on Nancy; for from Meg I have no hope of extracting a word of truth.

I dined yesterday at Holland House: all lords except myself. Lord Radnor, Lord Poltimore, Lord King, Lord Russell, and his uncle Lord John. Lady Holland was very gracious, praised my article on Burleigh to the skies, and told me, among other things, that she had talked on the preceding day for two hours with Charles Grant upon religion, and had found him very liberal and tolerant. It was, I suppose, the cholera which sent her ladyship to the only saint in the ministry for ghostly counsel. Poor Macdonald's case was most undoubtedly cholera. It is said that Lord Amesbury also died of cholera, though no very strange explanation seems necessary to account for the death of a man of eighty-four. Yesterday it was rumored that the three Miss Molyneuxes — of whom, by the way, there are only two — were all dead in the same way; that the Bishop of Worcester and Lord Barham were no more; and many other foolish stories. I do not believe there is the slightest ground for uneasiness, though Lady Holland apparently considers the case so serious that she has taken her conscience out of Allen's keeping and put it into the hands of Charles Grant.

Here I end my letter; a great deal too long already for so busy a man to write, and for such careless correspondents to receive. T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

LONDON, July 6th, 1832.

" Be you Foxes, be you Pitts,
You must write to silly chits.
Be you Tories, be you Whigs,
You must write to sad young gigs.

" On whatever board you are —
Treasury, Admiralty, War,
Customs, Stamps, Excise, Control —
Write you must, upon my soul."

So sings the Judicious Poet: and here I sit in my parlor, looking out on the Thames, and divided, like Garrick in Sir Joshua's picture, between Tragedy and Comedy, — a letter to you, and a bundle of papers about Hydrabad, and the firm of Palmer & Co., late bankers to the Nizan.

Poor Sir Walter Scott is going back to Scotland by sea to-morrow. All hope is over; and he has a restless wish to die at home. He is many thousand pounds worse than nothing. Last week he was thought to be so near his end that some people went, I understand, to sound Lord Althorp about a public funeral. Lord Althorp said, very like himself, that if public money was to be laid out, it would be better to give it to the family than to spend it in one day's show. The family, however, are said to be not ill off.

I am delighted to hear of your proposed tour, but not so well pleased to be told that you expect to be bad correspondents during your stay at Welsh inns. Take pens and ink with you, if you think that you shall find none at The Bard's Head, or The Glendower Arms. But it will be too bad if you send me no letters during a tour which will furnish so many subjects. Why not keep a journal, and minute down in it all that you see and hear? and remember that I charge you, as the venerable circle charged Miss Byron, to tell me of every person who "regards you with an eye of partiality."

What can I say more? as the Indians end their letters. Did not Lady Holland tell me of some good novels? I remember Henry Masterton, three volumes, an amusing story and a happy termination. Smuggle it in, next time that you go to Liverpool, from some circulating library; and deposit it in a lock-up place out of the reach of them that are clothed in drab; and read it together at the curling hour.

My article on Mirabeau will be out in the forthcoming number. I am not a good judge of my own compositions, I fear; but I think that it will be popular. A Yankee has written to me to say that an edition of my works is about to be published in America with my Life prefixed, and that he shall be obliged to me to tell him when I was born, whom I married, and so forth. I guess I must answer him slick right away. For, as the Judicious Poet observes, —

> "Though a New England man lolls back in his chair,
> With a pipe in his mouth, and his legs in the air,
> Yet surely an Old England man such as I
> To a kinsman by blood should be civil and spry."

How I run on in quotation! But when I begin to cite the verses of our great writers I never can stop. Stop I must, however. Yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

London, July 18th, 1832.

My dear Sisters, — I have heard from Napier. He speaks rapturously of my article on Dumont, but sends me no money. Allah blacken his face! as the Persians say. He has not yet paid me for Burleigh.

We are worked to death in the House of Commons, and we are henceforth to sit on Saturdays. This, indeed, is the only way to get through our business. On Saturday next we shall, I hope, rise before seven, as I am engaged to dine on that day with pretty, witty Mrs. ——. I fell in with her at Lady Grey's great crush, and found her very agreeable. Her husband is nothing in society. Rogers has some very good stories about their domestic happiness — stories confirming a theory of mine which, as I remember, made you very angry. When they first married, Mrs. —— treated her husband with great respect. But, when his novel came out and failed completely, she changed her conduct, and has, ever since that unfortunate publication, henpecked the poor author unmercifully. And the case, says Rogers, is the harder, because it is suspected that she wrote part of the book herself. It is like the scene in Milton where Eve, after tempting Adam, abuses him for yielding to temptation. But do you not remember how I told you that much of the love of women depended on the eminence of men? And do you not remember how, on behalf of your sex, you resented the imputation?

As to the present state of affairs abroad and at home, I cannot sum it up better than in these beautiful lines of the poet: —

"Peel is preaching, and Croker is lying.
The cholera's raging, the people are dying.
When the House is the coolest, as I am alive,
The thermometer stands at a hundred and five.
We debate in a heat that seems likely to burn us,
Much like the three children who sung in the furnace.
The disorders at Paris have not ceased to plague us;
Don Pedro, I hope, is ere this on the Tagus;
In Ireland no tithe can be raised by a parson;
Mr. Smithers is just hanged for murder and arson;
Dr. Thorpe has retired from the Lock, and 't is said
That poor little Wilks will succeed in his stead."

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

Library of the H. of C.,
July 30th, 1832, 11 o'clock at night.

My dear Sisters, — Here I am. Daniel Whittle Harvey is speaking; the House is thin; the subject is dull; and I have stolen away to write to you. Lushington is scribbling at my side. No sound is heard but the scratching of our pens, and the ticking of the clock. We are in a far better atmosphere than in the smoking-room, whence I wrote to you last week; and the company is more decent, inasmuch as that naval officer, whom Nancy blames me for describing in just terms, is not present.

By the bye, you know doubtless the lines which are in the mouth of every member of Parliament, depicting the comparative merits of the two rooms. They are, I think, very happy.

"If thou goest into the smoking-room,
Three plagues will thee befall, —
The chloride of lime, the tobacco-smoke,
And the captain, who 's worst of all —
    The canting sea-captain,
    The prating sea-captain,
The captain, who 's worst of all.

"If thou goest into the library,
Three good things will thee befall, —
Very good books, and very good air,
And M*c**l*y, who 's best of all —
The virtuous M*c**l*y,
The prudent M*c**l*y,
M*c**l*y, who 's best of all."

Oh, how I am worked! I never see Fanny from Sunday to Sunday. All my civilities wait for that blessed day; and I have so many scores of visits to pay that I can scarcely find time for any of that Sunday reading in which, like Nancy, I am in the habit of indulging. Yesterday, as soon as I was fixed in my best and had breakfasted, I paid a round of calls to all my friends who had the cholera. Then I walked to all the clubs of which I am a member to see the newspapers. The first of these two works you will admit to be a work of mercy; the second, in a political man, one of necessity. Then, like a good brother, I walked under a burning sun to Kensington to ask Fanny how she did, and stayed there two hours. Then I went to Knightsbridge to call on Mrs. Lister, and chatted with her till it was time to go and dine at the Athenæum. Then I dined, and after dinner, like a good young man, I sat and read Bishop Heber's journal till bedtime. There is a Sunday for you! I think that I excel in the diary line. I will keep a journal, like the bishop, that my memory may

"Smell sweet and blossom in the dust."

Next Sunday I am to go to Lord Lansdowne's at Richmond, so that I hope to have something to tell you. But on second thoughts I will tell you nothing, nor ever will write to you again, nor ever speak to you again. I have no pleasure in writing to undutiful sisters. Why do you not send me longer letters? But I am at the end of my paper, so that I have no more room to scold.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

LONDON, August 14th, 1832.

MY DEAR SISTERS, — Our work is over at last; not, however, till it has half killed us all.[1] On Saturday we met for the last time, I hope, on business. When the House rose, I set off for Holland House. We had a small party, but a very distinguished one. Lord Grey, the Chancellor, Lord Palmerston, Luttrell, and myself were the only guests. Allen was of course at the end of the table, carving the dinner and sparring with my lady. The dinner was not so good as usual, for the French cook was ill, and her ladyship kept up a continued lamentation during the whole repast. I should never have found out that everything was not as it should be but for her criticisms. The soup was too salt; the cutlets were not exactly *comme il faut;* and the pudding was hardly enough boiled. I was amused to hear from the splendid mistress of such a house the same sort of apologies which —— made when her cook forgot the joint and sent up too small a dinner to table. I told Luttrell that it was a comfort to me to find that no rank was exempted from these afflictions.

They talked about ——'s marriage. Lady Holland vehemently defended the match; and when Allen said that —— had caught a Tartar, she quite went off into one of her tantrums: "She a Tartar! Such a charming girl a Tartar! He is a very happy man, and your language is insufferable, — insufferable, Mr. Allen." Lord Grey had all the trouble in the world to appease her. His influence, however, is very great. He prevailed on her to receive Allen again into favor, and to let Lord Holland have a slice of melon, for which he had been petitioning most piteously, but which she had steadily refused on account of his gout. Lord Holland thanked Lord Grey for his intercession. "Ah, Lord Grey, I wish you were always here. It is a fine thing to be prime minister." This tattle is worth nothing, except to show how much the people whose names will fill the history of our times resemble in all essential matters the quiet folks who live in Mecklenburg Square and Brunswick Square.

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[1] On the 8th of August, 1832, Macaulay writes to Lord Mahon: "We are now strictly on duty. No furloughs even for a dinner engagement, or a sight of Taglioni's legs, can be obtained. It is very hard to keep forty members in the House. Sibthorpe and Leader are on the watch to count us out; and from six till two we never venture farther than the smoking-room without apprehension. In spite of all our exertions, the end of the session seems farther and farther off every day. If you would do me the favor of inviting Sibthorpe to Chevening Park you might be the means of saving my life, and that of thirty or forty more of us, who are forced to swallow the last dregs of the oratory of this Parliament; and nauseous dregs they are."

I slept in the room which was poor Mackintosh's. The next day, Sunday, —— came to dinner. He scarcely ever speaks in the society of Holland House. Rogers, who is the bitterest and most cynical observer of little traits of character that ever I knew, once said to me of him: "Observe that man. He never talks to men; he never talks to girls; but, when he can get into a circle of old tabbies, he is just in his element. He will sit clacking with an old woman for hours together. That always settles my opinion of a young fellow."

I am delighted to find that you like my review on Mirabeau, though I am angry with Margaret for grumbling at my Scriptural allusions, and still more angry with Nancy for denying my insight into character. It is one of my strong points. If she knew how far I see into hers, she would be ready to hang herself. Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

London, August 17th, 1832.

My dear Sisters, — I brought down my story of Holland House to dinner-time on Saturday evening. To resume my narrative, I slept there on Sunday night. On Monday morning, after breakfast, I walked to town with Luttrell, whom I found a delightful companion. Before we went, we sat and chatted with Lord Holland in the library for a quarter of an hour. He was very entertaining. He gave us an account of a visit which he paid long ago to the court of Denmark, and of King Christian, the madman, who was at last deprived of all real share in the government on account of his infirmity. "Such a Tom of Bedlam I never saw," said Lord Holland. "One day the Neapolitan Embassador came to the levee, and made a profound bow to his majesty. His majesty bowed still lower. The Neapolitan bowed down his head almost to the ground; when, behold! the king clapped his hands on his excellency's shoulders, and jumped over him like a boy playing at leap-frog. Another day the English Embassador was sitting opposite the king at dinner. His majesty asked him to take wine. The glasses were filled. The embassador bowed, and put the wine to his lips. The king grinned hideously, and threw his wine into the face of one of the footmen. The other guests kept the most profound gravity; but the Englishman, who had but lately come to Copenhagen, though a practised diplomatist, could not help giving some signs of astonishment. The king immediately addressed him in French: 'Eh, mais, Monsieur l'Envoyé d'Angleterre, qu'avez-vous donc? Pourquoi riez-vous? Est-ce qu'il y ait quelque chose qui vous ait diverti? Faites-moi le plaisir de me l'indiquer. J'aime beaucoup les ridicules.' "

Parliament is up at last. We official men are now left alone at the West End of London, and are making up for our long confinement in the mornings by feasting together at night. On Wednesday I dined with Labouchere at his official residence in Somerset House. It is well that he is a bachelor; for he tells me that the ladies, his neighbors, make bitter complaints of the unfashionable situation in which they are cruelly obliged to reside gratis. Yesterday I dined with Will Brougham, and an official party, in Mount Street. We are going to establish a Club to be confined to members of the House of

Commons in place under the present Government, who are to dine together weekly at Grillon's Hotel, and to settle the affairs of the state better, I hope, than our masters at their cabinet dinners. Ever yours,

T. B. M.

TO MACVEY NAPIER

LEEDS, September 5th, 1832.

DEAR NAPIER, — I am in the midst of a storm — making four or five speeches a day, riding in procession, shaking the hands of thousands.[1] My success here is, I believe, out of all doubt. On Saturday I hope to make my escape, and to pass ten days at Mr. Babington's Rothley Temple, Leicester. If the next number is to come out on the first of October, I fear that I can do nothing for you. I thought of reviewing Lord Mahon's book on the War of the Spanish Succession, that is, if it should be good enough to deserve a sentence of commendation; for I have a kindness for his lordship, and should not like to cut up his work. The nature of that war — the policy of Louis, his character and that of Philip the Fifth, the state of parties in England during the reign of Anne, the chief public men, Marlborough, Godolphin, Sunderland, Harley, St. John, Swift, Addison, would be capital subjects. If you have no objection, I will at all events take the subject for the January number.

Ever yours truly, T. B. M.

TO HANNAH M. MACAULAY

LONDON, September 20th, 1832.

MY DEAR SISTER, — I am at home again from Leeds, where everything is going on as well as possible. I, and most of my friends, feel sanguine as to the result. About half my day was spent in speaking, and hearing other people speak; in squeezing and being squeezed; in shaking hands with people whom I never saw before, and whose faces and names I forget within a minute after being introduced to them. The rest was passed in conversation with my leading friends, who are very honest, substantial manufacturers. They feed me on roast beef and Yorkshire pudding; at night they put me into capital bedrooms; and the only plague which they give me is that they are always begging me to mention some food or wine for which I have a fancy, or some article of comfort and convenience which I may wish them to procure.

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[1] [Macaulay had been invited to stand for Leeds, by the Whigs. The Tories brought forward Mr. Michael Sadler, whose work Macaulay had criticised severely in the Edinburgh Review.]

I travelled to town with a family of children who ate without intermission from Market Harborough, where they got into the coach, to the Peacock at Islington, where they got out of it. They breakfasted as if they had fasted all the preceding day. They dined as if they had never breakfasted. They ate on the road one large basket of sandwiches, another of fruit, and a boiled fowl; besides which there was not an orange-girl, or an old man with cakes, or a boy with filberts, who came to the coach-side when we stopped to change horses, of whom they did not buy something.

I am living here by myself, with no society, or scarcely any, except my books. I read a play of Calderon before I breakfast; then look over the newspaper; frank letters; scrawl a line or two to a foolish girl in Leicestershire; and walk to my office. There I stay till near five, examining claims of money-lenders on the native sovereigns of India, and reading parliamentary papers. I am beginning to understand something about the Bank, and hope, when next I go to Rothley Temple, to be a match for the whole firm of Mansfield and Babington on questions relating to their own business. When I leave the board, I walk for two hours; then I dine; and I end the day quietly over a basin of tea and a novel.

On Saturday I go to Holland House, and stay there till Monday. Her ladyship wants me to take up my quarters almost entirely there; but I love my own chambers and independence, and am neither qualified nor inclined to succeed Allen in his post. On Friday week, that is, to-morrow week, I shall go for three days to Sir George Philips's, at Weston, in Warwickshire. He has written again in terms half complaining; and, though I can ill spare time for the visit, yet, as he was very kind to me when his kindness was of some consequence to me, I cannot, and will not, refuse. Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

LONDON, September 25th, 1832.

MY DEAR SISTER, — I went on Saturday to Holland House, and stayed there Sunday. It was legitimate Sabbath employment — visiting the sick — which, as you well know, always stands first among the works of mercy enumerated in good books. My lord was ill, and my lady thought herself so. He was, during the greater part of the day, in bed. For a few hours he lay on his sofa, wrapped in flannels. I sat by him about twenty minutes, and was then ordered away. He was very weak and languid; and, though the torture of the gout was over, was still in pain; but he retained all his courage, and all his sweetness of temper. I told his sister that I did not think that he was suffering much. "I hope not," said she; "but it is impossible to judge by what he says; for through the sharpest pain of the attack he never complained." I admire him more, I think, than any man whom I know. He is only fifty-seven or fifty-eight. He is precisely the man to whom health would be particularly valuable, for he has the keenest zest for those pleasures which health would enable him to enjoy. He is, however, an invalid and a cripple. He passes some weeks of every year in extreme torment. When he is in his best health he can only limp a hundred yards in a day. Yet he never says a cross word. The sight of him spreads good humor over the face of every one who comes near him. His sister, an excellent old maid as ever lived, and the favorite of all the young people of her acquaintance, says that it is quite a pleasure to nurse him. She was reading The Inheritance to him as he lay in bed, and he enjoyed it amazingly. She is a famous reader; more quiet and less theatrical than most famous readers, and therefore the fitter for the bedside of a sick man. Her ladyship had fretted herself into being ill, could eat nothing but the breast of a partridge, and was frightened out of her wits by hearing a dog howl. She was sure that this noise portended her death, or my lord's. Toward the evening, however, she brightened up, and was in very good spirits. My visit was not very lively. They dined at four, and the company was, as you may suppose at this season, but scanty. Charles Greville, commonly called — Heaven knows why — Punch Greville, came on the Saturday. Byng, named from his hair Poodle Byng, came on the Sunday. Allen, like the poor, we had with us always. I was grateful, however, for many pleasant evenings passed there when London was full and Lord Holland out of bed. I therefore did my best to keep the house alive. I had the library and the delightful gardens to myself during most of the day, and I got through my visit very well.

News you have in the papers. Poor Scott is gone; and I cannot be sorry for it. A powerful mind in ruins is the most heart-breaking thing which it is possible to conceive. Ferdinand of Spain is gone too; and, I fear, old Mr. Stephen is going fast. I am safe at Leeds. Poor Hyde Villiers is very ill. I am seriously alarmed about him. Kindest love to all. Ever yours,

T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

WESTON HOUSE, September 29th, 1832.

MY DEAR SISTER, — I came hither yesterday, and found a handsome house, pretty grounds, and a very kind host and hostess. The house is really very well planned.

I do not know that I have ever seen so happy an imitation of the domestic architecture of Elizabeth's reign. The oriels, towers, terraces, and battlements are in the most perfect keeping; and the building is as convenient within as it is picturesque without. A few weather-stains, or a few American creepers, and a little ivy, would make it perfect: and all that will come, I suppose, with time. The terrace is my favorite spot. I always liked "the trim gardens" of which Milton speaks, and thought that Brown and his imitators went too far in bringing forests and sheep-walks up to the very windows of drawing-rooms.

I came through Oxford. It was as beautiful a day as the second day of our visit, and the High Street was in all its glory. But it made me quite sad to find myself there without you and Margaret. All my old Oxford associations are gone. Oxford, instead of being, as it used to be, the magnificent old city of the seventeenth century, — still preserving its antique character among the improvements of modern times, and exhibiting in the midst of upstart Birminghams and Manchesters the same aspect which it wore when Charles held his court at Christchurch, and Rupert led his cavalry over Magdalene Bridge, — is now to me only the place where I was so happy with my little sisters. But I was restored to mirth, and even to indecorous mirth, by what happened after we had left the fine old place behind us. There was a young fellow of about five-and-twenty, mustached and smartly dressed, in the coach with me. He was not absolutely uneducated, for he was reading a novel, The Hungarian Brothers, the whole way. We rode, as I told you, through the High Street. The coach stopped to dine; and this youth passed half an hour in the midst of that city of palaces. He looked about him with his mouth open as he reëntered the coach, and all the while that we were driving away past the Ratcliffe Library, the Great Court of All-Souls, Exeter, Lincoln, Trinity, Balliol, and St. John's. When we were about a mile on the road he spoke the first words that I had heard him utter. "That was a pretty town enough. Pray, sir, what is it called?" I could not answer him for laughing; but he seemed quite unconscious of his own absurdity.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO ——[1]

London, August 3d, 1832.

My dear Sir, — I am truly happy to find that the opinion of my friends at Leeds on the subject of canvassing agrees with that which I have long entertained. The practice of begging for votes is, as it seems to me, absurd, pernicious, and altogether at variance with the true principles of representative government. The suffrage of an elector ought not to be asked, or to be given as a personal favor. It is as much for the interest of constituents to choose well as it can be for the interest of a candidate to be chosen. To request an honest man to vote according to his conscience is superfluous. To request him to vote against his conscience is an insult. The practice of canvassing is quite reasonable under a system in which men are sent to Parliament to serve themselves. It is the height of absurdity under a system under which men are sent to Parliament to serve the public. While we had only a mock representation, it was natural enough that this practice should be carried to a great extent. I trust it will soon perish with the abuses from which it sprung. I trust that the great and intelligent body of people who have obtained the elective franchise will see that seats in the House of Commons ought not to be given, like rooms in an almshouse, to urgency of solicitation; and that a man who surrenders his vote to caresses and supplications forgets his duty as much as if he sold it for a bank note. I hope to see the day when an Englishman will think it as great an affront to be courted and fawned upon in his capacity of elector as in his capacity of juryman. He would be shocked at the thought of finding an unjust verdict because the plaintiff or the defendant had been very civil and pressing; and, if he would reflect, he would, I think, be equally shocked at the thought of voting for a candidate for whose public character he felt no esteem, merely because that candidate had called upon him, and begged very hard, and had shaken his hand very warmly. My conduct is before the electors of Leeds. My opinions shall on all occasions be stated to them with perfect frankness. If they approve that conduct, if they concur in those opinions, they ought, not for my sake, but for their own, to choose me as their member. To be so chosen I should indeed consider as a high and enviable honor; but I should think it no honor to be returned to Parliament by persons who, thinking me destitute of the requisite qualifications, had yet been wrought upon by cajolery and importunity to poll for me in despite of their better judgment.

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[1] [One of his supporters in the contest at Leeds.]

I wish to add a few words touching a question which has lately been much canvassed: I mean the question of pledges. In this letter, and in every letter which I have written to my friends at Leeds, I have plainly declared my *opinions*. But I think it, at this conjuncture, my duty to declare that I will give *no pledges*. I will not bind myself to make or to support any particular motion. I will state as shortly as I can some of the reasons which have induced me to form this determination. The great beauty of the representative system is that it unites the advantages of popular control with the advantages arising from a division of labor. Just as the physician understands medicine better than an ordinary man, just as a shoemaker makes shoes better than an ordinary man, so a person whose life is passed in transacting affairs of state becomes a better statesman than an ordinary man. In politics, as well as every other department of life, the public ought to have the means of checking those who serve it. If a man finds that he derives no benefit from the prescription of his physician, he calls in another. If his shoes do not fit him, he changes his shoemaker. But when he has called in a physician of whom he hears a good report, and whose general practice he believes to be judicious, it would be absurd in him to tie down that physician to order particular pills and particular draughts. While he continues to be the customer of a shoemaker, it would be absurd in him to sit by and mete every motion of that shoemaker's hand. And in the same manner, it would, I think, be absurd in him to require positive pledges, and to exact daily and hourly obedience, from his representative. My opinion is that electors ought at first to choose cautiously; then to confide liberally; and, when the term for which they have selected their member has expired, to review his conduct equitably, and to pronounce on the whole taken together.

If the people of Leeds think proper to repose in me that confidence which is necessary to the proper discharge of the duties of a representative, I hope that I shall not abuse it. If it be their pleasure to fetter their members by positive promises, it is in their power to do so. I can only say that on such terms I cannot conscientiously serve them.

I hope, and feel assured, that the sincerity with which I make this explicit declaration will, if it deprive me of the votes of my friends at Leeds, secure to me what I value far more highly, their esteem. Believe me ever, my dear sir, Your most faithful servant,

T. B. MACAULAY.

TO HANNAH M. MACAULAY

LEEDS, December 12th, 1832.

MY DEAR SISTER, — The election here is going on as well as possible. To-day the poll stands thus: —

Marshall, 1804........Macaulay, 1792........Sadler, 1353.

The probability is that Sadler will give up the contest.

If he persists, he will be completely beaten. The voters are under 4000 in number; those who have already polled are 3100; and about 500 will not poll at all. Even if we were not to bring up another man, the probability is that we should win. On Sunday morning early I hope to be in London; and I shall see you in the course of the day.

I had written thus far when your letter was delivered to me. I am sitting in the midst of two hundred friends, all mad with exultation and party spirit, all glorying over the Tories, and thinking me the happiest man in the world. And it is all that I can do to hide my tears, and to command my voice, when it is necessary for me to reply to their congratulations. Dearest, dearest sister, you alone are now left to me. Whom have I on earth but thee? But for you, in the midst of all these successes, I should wish that I were lying by poor Hyde Villiers. But I cannot go on. I am wanted to write an address to the electors; and I shall lay it on Sadler pretty heavily. By what strange fascination is it that ambition and resentment exercise such power over minds which ought to be superior to them? I despise myself for feeling so bitterly toward this fellow as I do. But the separation from dear Margaret has jarred my whole temper. I am cried up here to the skies as the most affable and kind-hearted of men, while I feel a fierceness and restlessness within me quite new and almost inexplicable. Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

LONDON, December 24th, 1832.

MY DEAR SISTER, — I am much obliged to you for your letter, and am gratified by all its contents, except what you say about your own cough. As soon as you come back, you shall see Dr. Chambers, if you are not quite well. Do not oppose me in this, for I have set my heart on it.

I dined on Saturday at Lord Essex's in Belgrave Square. But never was there such a take-in. I had been given to understand that his lordship's *cuisine* was superintended by the first French artists, and that I should find there all the luxuries of the Almanach des Gourmands. What a mistake! His lordship is luxurious indeed, but in quite a different way. He is a true Englishman. Not a dish on his table but what Sir Roger de Coverley, or Sir Hugh Tyrold,[1] might have set before his guests. A huge haunch of venison on the sideboard; a magnificent piece of beef at the bottom of the table; and before my lord himself smoked, not a *dindon aux truffes*, but a fat roasted goose stuffed with sage and onions. I was disappointed, but very agreeably; for my tastes are, I fear, incurably vulgar, as you may perceive by my fondness for Mrs. Meeke's novels.

Our party consisted of Sharp; Lubbock; Watson, M. P. for Canterbury; and Rich, the author of What will the Lords do? who wishes to be M. P. for Knaresborough. Rogers was to have been of the party; but his brother chose that very day to die upon, so that poor Sam had to absent himself. The chancellor was also invited, but he had scampered off to pass his Christmas with his old mother in Westmoreland. We had some good talk, particularly about Junius's Letters. I learned some new facts which I will tell you when we meet. I am more and more inclined to believe that Francis was one of the people principally concerned.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

House of Commons, Monday Night, half past 12.

My dear Sister, — The papers will scarcely contain any account of what passed yesterday in the House of Commons in the middle of the day. Grant and I fought a battle with Briscoe and O'Connell in defence of the

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[1] The uncle of Miss Burney's Camilla.

Indian people, and won it by 38 to 6.[1] It was a rascally claim of a dishonest agent of the company against the employers whom he had cheated, and sold to their own tributaries. The nephew of the original claimant has been pressing his case on the Board most vehemently. He is an attorney living in Russell Square, and very likely hears the word at St. John's Chapel. He hears it, however, to very little purpose; for he lies as much as if he went to hear a "cauld clatter of morality" at the parish church.

I remember that when you were at Leamington two years ago I used to fill my letters with accounts of the people with whom I dined. High life was new to me then; and now it has grown so familiar that I should not, I fear, be able, as I formerly was, to select the striking circumstances. I have dined with sundry great folks since you left London, and I have attended a very splendid rout at Lord Grey's. I stole thither, at about eleven, from the House of Commons, with Stewart Mackenzie. I do not mean to describe the beauty of the ladies, nor the brilliancy of stars and uniforms. I mean only to tell you one circumstance which struck, and even affected me. I was talking to Lady Charlotte Lindsay, the daughter of Lord North, a great favorite of mine, about the apartments and the furniture, when she said, with a good deal of emotion: "This is an interesting visit to me. I have never been in this house for fifty years. It was here that I was born; I left it a child when my father fell from power in 1782, and I have never crossed the threshold since." Then she told me how the rooms seemed dwindled to her; how the staircase, which appeared to her in recollection to be the most spacious and magnificent that she had ever seen, had disappointed her. She longed, she said, to go over the garrets and rummage her old nursery. She told me how, in the No-Popery riots of 1780, she was taken out of bed at two o'clock in the morning. The mob threatened Lord North's house. There were soldiers at the windows, and an immense and furious crowd in Downing Street. She saw, she said, from her nursery the fires in different parts of London; but she did not understand the danger, and only exulted in being up at midnight. Then she was conveyed through the Park to the Horse Guards as the safest place; and was laid, wrapped up in blankets, on the table in the guard-room in the midst of the officers. "And it was such fun," she said, "that I have ever after had rather a liking for insurrections."

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[1] In his great Indian speech Macaulay referred to this affair, in a passage, the first sentence of which has, by frequent quotation, been elevated into an apothegm: "A broken head in Cold Bath Fields produces a greater sensation than three pitched battles in India. A few weeks ago we had to decide on a claim brought by an individual against the revenues of India. If it had been an English question, the walls would scarcely have held the members who would have flocked to the division. It was an Indian question; and we could scarcely, by dint of supplication, make a House."

I write in the midst of a crowd. A debate on slavery is going on in the Commons; a debate on Portugal in the Lords. The door is slamming behind me every moment, and people are constantly going out and in. Here comes Vernon Smith. "Well, Vernon, what are they doing?" "Gladstone has just made a very good speech, and Howick is answering him." "Aye, but in the House of Lords?" "They will beat us by twenty, they say." "Well, I do not think it matters much." "No; nobody out of the House of Lords cares either for Don Pedro or for Don Miguel."

There is a conversation between two official men in the Library of the House of Commons on the night of the third of June, 1833, reported word for word. To the historian three centuries hence this letter will be invaluable. To you, ungrateful as you are, it will seem worthless.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

Smoking Room of the House of Commons,
June 6th, 1833.

My Darling, — Why am I such a fool as to write to a gypsy at Liverpool, who fancies that none is so good as she if she sends one letter for my three? A lazy chit whose fingers tire with penning a page in reply to a quire! There, miss, you read all the first sentence of my epistle, and never knew that you were reading verse. I have some gossip for you about the Edinburgh Review. Napier is in London, and has called on me several times. He has been with the publishers, who tell him that the sale is falling off; and in many private parties, where he hears sad complaints. The universal cry is that the long dull articles are the ruin of the Review. As to myself, he assures me that my articles are the only things which keep the work up at all. Longman and his partners correspond with about five hundred booksellers in different parts of the kingdom. All these booksellers, I find, tell them that the Review sells, or does not sell, according as there are, or are not, articles by Mr. Macaulay. So, you see, I, like Mr. Darcy,[1] shall not care how proud I am. At all events, I cannot but be pleased to learn that, if I should be forced to depend on my pen for subsistence, I can command what price I choose.

The House is sitting; Peel is just down; Lord Palmerston is speaking; the heat is tremendous; the crowd stifling; and so here I am in the smoking-room, with three Repealers making chimneys of their mouths under my very nose.

To think that this letter will bear to my Anna
The exquisite scent of O'Connor's Havana!

You know that the Lords have been foolish enough to pass a vote[2] implying censure on the ministers. The ministers do not seem inclined to take it of them. The King has snubbed their lordships properly; and in about an hour, as I guess (for it is near eleven), we shall have come to a resolution in direct opposition to that agreed to by the Upper House. Nobody seems to care one straw for what the Peers say about any public matter. A resolution of the Court of Common Council, or of a meeting at Freemasons' Hall, has often made a greater sensation than this declaration of a branch of the Legislature against the Executive Government. The institution of the peerage is evidently dying a natural death.

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[1] The central male figure in Pride and Prejudice.

[2] On June 3, 1833, a vote of censure on the Portuguese policy of the

I dined yesterday — where, and on what, and at what price, I am ashamed to tell you. Such scandalous extravagance and gluttony I will not commit to writing. I blush when I think of it. You, however, are not wholly guiltless in this matter. My nameless offence was partly occasioned by Napier; and I have a very strong reason for wishing to keep Napier in good humor. He has promised to be at Edinburgh when I take a certain damsel thither; to look out for very nice lodgings for us in Queen Street; to show us everything and everybody; and to see us as far as Dunkeld on our way northward, if we do go northward. In general I abhor visiting; but at Edinburgh we must see the people as well as the walls and windows; and Napier will be a capital guide.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

LONDON, June 17th, 1833.

DEAR HANNAH, — All is still anxiety here. Whether the House of Lords will throw out the Irish Church Bill, whether the King will consent to create new peers, whether the Tories will venture to form a ministry, are matters about which we are all in complete doubt. If the ministry should really be changed, Parliament will, I feel

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ministry was moved by the Duke of Wellington, and carried in the Lords by 79 votes to 69. On June 6th a counter-resolution was carried in the Commons by 361 votes to 98.

quite sure, be dissolved. Whether I shall have a seat in the next Parliament I neither know nor care. I shall regret nothing for myself but our Scotch tour. For the public I shall, if this Parliament be dissolved, entertain scarcely any hopes. I see nothing before us but a frantic conflict between extreme opinions; a short period of oppression; then a convulsive reaction; and then a tremendous crash of the Funds, the Church, the Peerage, and the Throne. It is enough to make the most strenuous royalist lean a little to republicanism to think that the whole question between safety and general destruction may probably, at this most fearful conjuncture, depend on a single man whom the accident of his birth has placed in a situation to which certainly his own virtues or abilities would never have raised him.

The question must come to a decision, I think, within the fortnight. In the meantime the funds are going down, the newspapers are storming, and the faces of men on both sides are growing day by day more gloomy and anxious. Even during the most violent part of the contest for the Reform Bill, I do not remember to have seen so much agitation in the political circles. I have some odd anecdotes for you, which I will tell you when we meet. If the Parliament should be dissolved, the West Indian and East Indian bills are of course dropped. What is to become of the slaves? What is to become of the tea-trade? Will the negroes, after receiving the resolutions of the House of Commons promising them liberty, submit to the cart-whip? Will our merchants consent to have the trade with China, which has just been offered to them, snatched away? The Bank charter, too, is suspended. But that is comparatively a trifle. After all, what is it to me who is in or out, or whether those fools of Lords are resolved to perish, and drag the King to perish with them, in the ruin which they have themselves made? I begin to wonder what the fascination is which attracts men who could sit over their tea and their books in their own cool, quiet room, to breathe bad air, hear bad speeches, lounge up and down the long gallery, and doze uneasily on the green benches till three in the morning. Thank God, these luxuries are not necessary to me. My pen is sufficient for my support, and my sister's company is sufficient for my happiness. Only let me see her well and cheerful; and let offices in Government, and seats in Parliament, go to those who care for them. If I were to leave public life to-morrow, I declare that, except for the vexation which it might give you and one or two others, the event would not be in the slightest degree painful to me. As you boast of having a greater insight into character than I allow to you, let me know how you explain this philosophical disposition of mine, and how you reconcile it with my ambitious inclinations. That is a problem for a young lady who professes knowledge of human nature.

Did I tell you that I dined at the Duchess of Kent's, and sat next that loveliest of women, Mrs. Littleton? Her husband, our new Secretary for Ireland, told me this evening that Lord Wellesley, who sat near us at the duchess's, asked Mrs. Littleton afterward who it was that was talking to her. "Mr. Macaulay." "Oh!" said the marquess, "I am very sorry I did not know it. I have a most particular desire to be acquainted with that man." Accordingly, Littleton has engaged me to dine with him, in order to introduce me to the marquess. I am particularly curious, and always was, to know him. He has made a great and splendid figure in history, and his weaknesses, though they make his character less worthy of respect, make it more interesting as a study. Such a blooming old swain I never saw; hair combed with exquisite nicety, a waistcoat of driven snow, and a star and garter put on with rare skill.

To-day we took up our resolutions about India to the House of Lords. The two Houses had a conference on the subject in an old Gothic room called the Painted Chamber. The painting consists in a mildewed daub of a woman in the niche of one of the windows. The Lords sat in little cocked hats along the table; and we stood uncovered on the other side, and delivered in our resolutions. I thought that before long it may be our turn to sit, and theirs to stand. Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

London, June 21st, 1833.

Dear Hannah,—I cannot tell you how delighted I was to learn from Fanny this morning that Margaret pronounces you to be as well as she could wish you to be. Only continue so, and all the changes of public life will be as indifferent to me as to Horatio. If I am only spared the misery of seeing you suffer, I shall be found

> "A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
> Has ta'en with equal thanks."

Whether we are to have buffets or rewards is known only to Heaven and to the Peers. I think that their lordships are rather cowed. Indeed, if they venture on the course on which they lately seemed bent, I would not give sixpence for a coronet or a penny for a mitre.

I shall not read The Repealers; and I think it very impudent in you to make such a request. Have I nothing to do but to be your novel-toaster? It is rather your duty to be mine. What else have you to do? I have read only one novel within the last week, and a most precious one it was: The Invisible Gentleman. Have you ever read it? But I need not ask. No doubt it has formed part of your Sunday studies. A wretched, trumpery imitation of Godwin's worst manner. What a number of stories I shall have to tell you when we meet!—which will be, as nearly as I can guess, about the tenth or twelfth of August. I shall be as rich as a Jew by that time.

> Next Wednesday will be quarter-day;
> And then, if I 'm alive,
> Of sterling pounds I shall receive
> Three hundred seventy-five.

Already I possess in cash
  Two hundred twenty-four,
Besides what I have lent to John,
  Which makes up twenty more.

Also the man who editeth
  The "Yellow and the Blue"
Doth owe me ninety pounds at least,
  All for my last review.

So, if my debtors pay their debts,
  You 'll find, dear sister mine,
That all my wealth together makes
  Seven hundred pounds and nine.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

LONDON, July 11th, 1833.

DEAR HANNAH, — I have been so completely overwhelmed with business for some days that I have not been able to find time for writing a line. Yesterday night we read the India Bill a second time. It was a Wednesday, and the reporters gave hardly any account of what passed. They always resent being forced to attend on that day, which is their holiday. I made the best speech, by general agreement, and in my own opinion, that I ever made in my life. I was an hour and three quarters up; and such compliments as I had from Lord Althorp, Lord Palmerston, Lord John Russell, Wynne, O'Connell, Grant, the Speaker, and twenty other people, you never heard. As there is no report of the speech, I have been persuaded, rather against my will, to correct it for publication. I will tell you one compliment that was paid me, and which delighted me more than any other. An old member said to me, "Sir, having heard that speech may console the young people for never having heard Mr. Burke."

TO THE SAME

LONDON, July 19th, 1833.

MY DEAR SISTER, — I snatch a few minutes to write a single line to you. We went into committee on the

India Bill at twelve this morning, sat till three, and are just set at liberty for two hours. At five we recommence, and shall be at work till midnight. In the interval between three and five I have to dispatch the current business of the office, which, at present, is fortunately not heavy; to eat my dinner, which I shall do at Grant's; and to write a short scrawl to my little sister.

My work, though laborious, has been highly satisfactory. No bill, I believe, of such importance — certainly no important bill in my time — has been received with such general approbation. The very cause of the negligence of the reporters, and of the thinness of the House, is that we have framed our measure so carefully as to give little occasion for debate. Littleton, Denison, and many other members, assure me that they never remember to have seen a bill better drawn or better conducted.

On Monday night, I hope, my work will be over. Our Bill will have been discussed, I trust, for the last time in the House of Commons; and, in all probability, I shall within forty-eight hours after that time be out of office. I am fully determined not to give way about the West India Bill; and I can hardly expect — I am sure I do not wish — that the ministers should suffer me to keep my place and oppose their measure. Whatever may befall me or my party, I am much more desirous to come to an end of this interminable session than to stay either in office or in Parliament. The Tories are quite welcome to take everything, if they will only leave me my pen and my books, a warm fireside, and you chattering beside it. This sort of philosophy, an odd kind of cross between Stoicism and Epicureanism, I have learned, where most people unlearn all their philosophy — in crowded senates and fine drawing-rooms.

But time flies, and Grant's dinner will be waiting. He keeps open house for us during this fight.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

London, July 24th, 1833.

My dear Sister, — You will have seen by the papers that the West India debate on Monday night went off very quietly in little more than an hour. To-night we expect the great struggle, and I fear that, much against my inclination, I must bear a part in it. My resignation is in Lord Althorp's hands. He assures me that he will do his utmost to obtain for me liberty to act as I like on this question; but Lord Grey and Stanley are to be consulted, and I think it very improbable that they will consent to allow me so extraordinary a privilege. I know that, if I were minister, I would not allow such latitude to any man in office; and so I told Lord Althorp. He answered in the kindest and most flattering manner; told me that in office I had surpassed their expectations, and that, much as they wished to bring me in last year, they wished much more to keep me in now. I told him, in reply, that the matter was one for the ministers to settle purely with a view to their own interest; that I asked for no indulgence; that I could make no terms; and that what I would not do to serve them, I certainly would not do to keep my place. Thus the matter stands. It will probably be finally settled within a few hours.

This detestable session goes on lengthening and lengthening, like a human hair in one's mouth. (Do you know that delicious sensation?) Last month we expected to have been up before the middle of August. Now we should be glad to be quite certain of being in the country by the first of September. One comfort I shall have in being turned out: I will not stay a day in London after the West India Bill is through committee; which I hope it will be before the end of next week.

The new Edinburgh Review is not much amiss; but I quite agree with the publishers, the editor, and the reading public generally, that the number would have been much the better for an article of thirty or forty pages. from the pen of a gentleman who shall be nameless.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

London, July 25th, 1833.

My dear Sister, — The plot is thickening. Yesterday Buxton moved an instruction to the Committee on the Slavery Bill, which the Government opposed, and which I supported. It was extremely painful to me to speak against all my political friends — so painful that at times I could hardly go on. I treated them as mildly as I could, and they all tell me that I performed my difficult task not ungracefully. We divided at two this morning, and were 151 to 158. The ministers found that if they persisted they would infallibly be beaten. Accordingly they came down to the House at twelve this day, and agreed to reduce the apprenticeship to seven years for the agricultural laborers, and to five years for the skilled laborers. What other people may do I cannot tell; but I am inclined to be satisfied with this concession; particularly as I believe that if we press the thing further they will resign, and we shall have no bill at all, but instead of it a Tory ministry and a dissolution. Some people flatter me with the assurance that our large minority, and the consequent change in the bill, have been owing to me. If this be so, I have done one useful act, at least, in my life.

I shall now certainly remain in office; and if, as I expect, the Irish Church Bill passes the Lords, I may consider myself as safe till the next session; when Heaven knows what may happen. It is still quite uncertain when we may rise. I pine for rest, air, and a taste of family life, more than I can express. I see nothing but politicians, and talk about nothing but politics.

I have not read Village Belles. Tell me, as soon as you can get it, whether it is worth reading. As John

Thorpe[1] says: "Novels! Oh, Lord! I never read novels. I have something else to do." Farewell. T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

LONDON, July 27th, 1833.

MY DEAR SISTER, — Here I am, safe and well, at the end of one of the most stormy weeks that the oldest man remembers in parliamentary affairs. I have resigned my office, and my resignation has been refused. I have spoken and voted against the ministry under which I hold my place. The ministry has been so hard run in the Commons as to be forced to modify its plan; and has received a defeat in the Lords;[2] a slight one, to be sure, and on a slight matter, yet such that I, and many others, fully believed twenty-four hours ago that they would have resigned. In fact, some of the Cabinet — Grant among the rest, to my certain knowledge — were for resigning. At last Saturday has arrived. The ministry is as strong as ever. I am as good friends with the ministers as ever. The East India Bill is carried through our House. The West India Bill is so far modified that, I believe, it will be carried. The Irish Church Bill has got through the committee in the Lords; and we are all beginning to look forward to a prorogation in about three weeks.

To-day I went to Haydon's to be painted into his great picture of The Reform Banquet. Ellis was with me, and declares that Haydon has touched me off to a nicety. I am sick of pictures of my own face. I have seen within the last few days one drawing of it, one engraving, and three paintings. They all make me a very handsome fellow. Haydon pronounces my profile a gem of art, perfectly antique; and, what is worth the praise of ten Haydons, I was told yesterday that Mrs. Littleton, the handsomest woman in London, had paid me exactly the same compliment. She pronounced Mr. Macaulay's profile to be a study for an artist. I have bought a new looking-glass and razor-case on the strength of these compliments, and am meditating on the expediency of having my hair cut in the Burlington Arcade, rather than in Lamb's, Conduit Street. As Richard says, —

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[1] The young Oxford man in Northanger Abbey.

[2] On the 25th of July the Archbishop of Canterbury carried an amendment on the Irish Church Bill, against the Government, by 84 votes to 82.

> "Since I am crept in favor with myself,
> I will maintain it with some little cost."

I begin, like Sir Walter Elliot,[1] to rate all my acquaintance according to their beauty. But what nonsense I write, and in times that make merry men look grave!

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

LONDON, July 29th, 1833.

MY DEAR SISTER, — I dined last night at Holland House. There was a very pleasant party. My lady was courteous, and my lord extravagantly entertaining: telling some capital stories about old Bishop Horsley, which were set off with some of the drollest mimicry that I ever saw. Among many others, there were Sir James Graham; and Dr. Holland, who is a good scholar as well as a good physician; and Wilkie, who is a modest, pleasing companion, as well as an excellent artist. For ladies, we had her Grace of ——; and her daughter, Lady ——, a fine, buxom, sonsy lass, with more color than, I am sorry to say, is often seen among fine ladies. So our dinner and our soirée were very agreeable.

We narrowly escaped a scene at one time. Lord —— is in the navy, and is now on duty in the fleet at the Tagus. We got into a conversation about Portuguese politics. His name was mentioned, and Graham, who is first lord of the admiralty, complimented the duchess on her son's merit, to which, he said, every dispatch bore witness. The duchess forthwith began to entreat that he might be recalled. He was very ill, she said. If he stayed longer on that station she was sure that he would die;

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[1] The Baronet in Persuasion.

and then she began to cry. I cannot bear to see women cry, and the matter became serious, for her pretty daughter began to bear her company. That hard-hearted Lord —— seemed to be diverted by the scene. He, by all accounts, has been doing little else than making women cry during the last five-and-twenty years. However, we all were as still as death while the wiping of eyes and the blowing of noses proceeded. At last Lord Holland contrived to restore our spirits; but before the duchess went away she managed to have a tête-à-tête with Graham, and, I have no doubt, begged and blubbered to some purpose. I could not help thinking how many honest, stout-hearted fellows are left to die on the most unhealthy stations, for want of being related to some duchess who has been handsome, or to some duchess's daughter who still is so.

The duchess said one thing that amused us. We were talking about Lady Morgan. "When she first came to London," said Lord Holland, "I remember that she carried a little Irish harp about with her wherever she went." Others denied this. I mentioned what she says in her Book of the Boudoir. There she relates how she went one evening to Lady ——'s with her little Irish harp, and how strange everybody thought it. "I see nothing very strange," said her Grace, "in her taking her harp to Lady ——'s. If she brought it safe away with her, that would have been strange indeed." On this, as a friend of yours says, we la-a-a-a-a-a-ft.

I am glad to find that you approve of my conduct about the niggers. I expect, and indeed wish, to be abused by the Agency Society. My father is quite satisfied, and so are the best part of my Leeds friends.

I amuse myself, as I walk back from the House at two in the morning, with translating Virgil. I am at work on one of the most beautiful episodes, and am succeeding pretty well. You shall have what I have done when I come to Liverpool, which will be, I hope, in three weeks or there-anent. Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

LONDON, July 31st, 1833.

MY DEAR SISTER, — Political affairs look cheeringly. The Lords passed the Irish Church Bill yesterday, and mean, we understand, to give us little or no trouble about the India Bill. There is still a hitch in the Commons about the West India Bill, particularly about the twenty millions for compensation to the planters; but we expect to carry our point by a great majority. By the end of next week we shall be very near the termination of our labors. Heavy labors they have been.

So Wilberforce is gone! We talk of burying him in Westminster Abbey; and many eminent men, both Whigs and Tories, are desirous to join in paying him this honor. There is, however, a story about a promise given to old Stephen that they should both lie in the same grave. Wilberforce kept his faculties, and (except when he was actually in fits) his spirits, to the very last. He was cheerful and full of anecdote only last Saturday. He owned that he enjoyed life much, and that he had a great desire to live longer. Strange in a man who had, I should have said, so little to attach him to this world, and so firm a belief in another: in a man with an impaired fortune, a weak spine, and a worn-out stomach! What is this fascination which makes us cling to existence, in spite of present sufferings and of religious hopes? Yesterday evening I called at the house in Cadogan Place, where the body is lying. I was truly fond of him: that is "je l'aimais comme l'on aime." And how is that? How very little one human being generally cares for another! How very little the world misses anybody! How soon the chasm left by the best and wisest men closes. I thought, as I walked back from Cadogan Place, that our own selfishness when others are taken away ought to teach us how little others will suffer at losing us. I thought that, if I were to die to-morrow, not one of the fine people whom I dine with every week will take a *côtelette aux petits pois* the less on Saturday at the table to which I was invited to meet them, or will smile less gayly at the ladies over the champagne. And I am quite even with them. What are those pretty lines of Shelley?

> "Oh, world, farewell!
> Listen to the passing bell.
> It tells that thou and I must part
> With a light and heavy heart."

There are not ten people in the world whose deaths would spoil my dinner; but there are one or two whose deaths would break my heart. The more I see of the world, and the more numerous my acquaintance becomes, the narrower and more exclusive my affection grows, and the more I cling to my sisters, and to one or two old tried friends of my quiet days. But why should I go on preaching to you out of Ecclesiastes? And here comes, fortunately, to break the train of my melancholy reflections, the proof of my East India speech from Hansard: so I must put my letter aside and correct the press.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

LONDON, August 2d, 1833.

MY DEAR SISTER, — I agree with your judgment on Chesterfield's Letters. They are for the most part trash; though they contain some clever passages, and the style is not bad. Their celebrity must be attributed to causes quite distinct from their literary merit, and particularly to the position which the author held in society. We see in our own time that the books written by public men of note are generally rated at more than their value; Lord Granville's little compositions, for example; Canning's verses; Fox's history; Brougham's treatises. The writings of people of high fashion, also, have a value set on them far higher than that which intrinsically belongs to them. The verses of the late Duchess of Devonshire, or an occasional prologue by Lord Alvanley, attract a most undue share of attention. If the present Duke of Devonshire, who is the very "glass of fashion and mould of form," were to publish a book with two good pages, it would be extolled as a masterpiece in half the drawing-rooms of London. Now, Chesterfield was, what no person in our time has been or can be, a great political leader, and at the same time the acknowledged chief of the fashionable world; at the head of the House of Lords and at the head of *ton;* Mr. Canning and the Duke of Devonshire in one. In our time the division of labor is carried so far that such a man could not exist. Politics require the whole of energy, bodily and mental, during half the year; and leave very little time for the bow-window at White's in the day, or for the crush-room of the opera at night. A century ago the case was different. Chesterfield was at once the most distinguished orator in the Upper House, and the undisputed sovereign of wit and fashion. He held this eminence for about forty years. At last it became the regular custom of the higher circles to laugh whenever he opened his mouth, without waiting for his *bon mot.* He used to sit at White's with a circle of young men of rank round him, applauding every syllable that he uttered. If you wish for a proof of the kind of position which Chesterfield held among his contemporaries, look at the prospectus of Johnson's Dictionary. Look even at Johnson's angry letter. It contains the strongest admission of the boundless influence which Chesterfield exercised over society. When the letters of such a man were published, of course they were received more favorably by far than they deserved.

So much for criticism. As to politics, everything seems tending to repose; and I should think that by this day fortnight we shall probably be prorogued. The Jew Bill was thrown out yesterday night by the Lords. No matter. Our turn will come one of these days.

If you want to see me puffed and abused by somebody who evidently knows nothing about me, look at the New Monthly for this month. Bulwer, I see, has given up editing it. I suppose he is making money in some other way; for his dress must cost as much as that of any five other members of Parliament.

To-morrow Wilberforce is to be buried. His sons acceded with great eagerness to the application made to them by a considerable number of the members of both Houses that the funeral should be public. We meet to-morrow at twelve at the House of Commons, and we shall attend the coffin into the Abbey. The Duke of Wellington, Lord Eldon, and Sir R. Peel have put down their names, as well as the ministers and the Abolitionists.

My father urges me to pay some tribute to Wilberforce in the House of Commons. If any debate should take place on the third reading of the West India Bill in which I might take part, I should certainly embrace the opportunity of doing honor to his memory. But I do not expect that such an occasion will arise. The House seems inclined to pass the bill without more contest; and my father must be aware that anything like theatrical display — anything like a set funeral oration not springing naturally out of the discussion of a question — is extremely distasteful to the House of Commons.

I have been clearing off a great mass of business which had accumulated at our office while we were conducting our bill through Parliament. To-day I had the satisfaction of seeing the green boxes, which a week ago were piled up with papers three or four feet high, perfectly empty. Admire my superhuman industry. This I will say for myself, that, when I do sit down to work, I work harder and faster than any person that I ever knew.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

LONDON, August 17th, 1833.

MY DEAR SISTER, — I am about to write to you on a subject which to you and Margaret will be one of the most agitating interest; and which, on that account chiefly, is so to me.

By the new India Bill it is provided that one of the members of the Supreme Council, which is to govern our Eastern empire, is to be chosen from among persons who are not servants of the company. It is probable, indeed nearly certain, that the situation will be offered to me.

The advantages are very great. It is a post of the highest dignity and consideration. The salary is ten thousand pounds a year. I am assured by persons who know Calcutta intimately, and who have themselves mixed in the highest circles and held the highest offices at that presidency, that I may live in splendor there for five thousand a year, and may save the rest of the salary with the accruing interest. I may therefore hope to return to England at only thirty-nine, in the full vigor of life, with a fortune of thirty thousand pounds. A larger fortune I never desired.

I am not fond of money, or anxious about it. But, though every day makes me less and less eager for wealth, every day shows me more and more strongly how necessary a competence is to a man who desires to be either great or useful. At present the plain fact is that I can continue to be a public man only while I can continue in office. If I left my place in the Government, I must leave my seat in Parliament too. For I must live: I can live only by my pen: and it is absolutely impossible for any man to write enough to procure him a decent subsistence, and at the same time to take an active part in politics. I have not during this session been able to send a single line to the Edinburgh Review; and if I had been out of office, I should have been able to do very little. Edward Bulwer has just given up the New Monthly Magazine on the ground that he cannot conduct it and attend to his parliamentary duties. Cobbett has been compelled to neglect his Register so much that its sale has fallen almost to nothing. Now, in order to live like a gentleman, it would be necessary for me to write, not as I have done hitherto, but regularly, and even daily. I have never made more than two hundred a year by my pen. I could not support myself in comfort on less than five hundred; and I shall in all probability have many others to support. The prospects of our family are, if possible, darker than ever.

In the meantime my political outlook is very gloomy. A schism in the ministry is approaching. It requires only that common knowledge of public affairs which any reader of the newspapers may possess to see this; and I have more, much more, than common knowledge on the subject. They cannot hold together. I tell you in perfect seriousness that my chance of keeping my present situation for six months is so small, that I would willingly sell it for fifty pounds down. If I remain in office, I shall, I fear, lose my political character. If I go out, and engage in opposition, I shall break most of the private ties which I have formed during the last three years. In England I see nothing before me, for some time to come, but poverty, unpopularity, and the breaking-up of old connections.

If there were no way out of these difficulties, I would encounter them with courage. A man can always act honorably and uprightly; and, if I were in the Fleet Prison or the rules of the King's Bench, I believe that I could find in my own mind resources which would preserve me from being positively unhappy. But if I could escape from these impending disasters, I should wish to do so. By accepting the post which is likely to be offered to me, I withdraw myself for a short time from the contests of faction here. When I return, I shall find things settled, parties formed into new combinations, and new questions under discussion. I shall then be able, without the scandal of a violent separation, and without exposing myself to the charge of inconsistency, to take my own line. In the meantime I shall save my family from distress; and shall return with a competence honestly earned, as rich as if I were Duke of Northumberland or Marquess of Westminster, and able to act on all public questions without even a temptation to deviate from the strict line of duty. While in India, I shall have to discharge duties not painfully laborious, and of the highest and most honorable kind. I shall have whatever that country affords of comfort or splendor; nor will my absence be so long that my friends, or the public here, will be likely to lose sight of me.

The only persons who know what I have written to you are Lord Grey, the Grants, Stewart Mackenzie, and George Babington. Charles Grant and Stewart Mackenzie, who know better than most men the state of the political world, think that I should act unwisely in refusing this post; and this though they assure me, and, I really believe, sincerely, that they shall feel the loss of my society very acutely. But what shall I feel? And with what emotions, loving as I do my country and my family, can I look forward to such a separation, enjoined, as I think it is, by prudence and by duty? Whether the period of my exile shall be one of comfort, and, after the first shock, even of happiness, depends on you. If, as I expect, this offer shall be made to me, will you go with me? I know what a sacrifice I ask of you. I know how many dear and precious ties you must, for a time, sunder. I know that the splendor of the Indian Court, and the gayeties of that brilliant society of which you would be one of the leading personages, have no temptation for you. I can bribe you only by telling you that, if you will go with me, I will love you better than I love you now, if I can.

I have asked George Babington about your health and mine. He says that he has very little apprehension for me, and none at all for you. Indeed, he seemed to think that the climate would be quite as likely to do you good as harm.

All this is most strictly secret. You may, of course, show the letter to Margaret, and Margaret may tell Edward; for I never cabal against the lawful authority of husbands. But further the thing must not go. It would hurt my father, and very justly, to hear of it from anybody before he hears of it from myself; and if the least hint of it were to get abroad, I should be placed in a very awkward position with regard to the people at Leeds. It is possible, though not probable, that difficulties may arise at the India House; and I do not mean to say anything to any person who is not already in the secret till the directors have made their choice, and till the king's pleasure has been taken.

And now think calmly over what I have written. I would not have written on the subject even to you till the matter was quite settled, if I had not thought that you ought to have full time to make up your mind. If you feel an insurmountable aversion to India, I will do all in my power to make your residence in England comfortable during my absence, and to enable you to confer instead of receiving benefits. But if my dear sister would consent to give me, at this great crisis of my life, that proof, that painful and arduous proof, of her affection which I beg of her, I think that she will not repent of it. She shall not, if the unbounded confidence and attachment of one to whom she is dearer than life can compensate her for a few years absence from much that she loves.

Dear Margaret! She will feel this. Consult her, my love, and let us both have the advantage of such advice as her excellent understanding, and her warm affection for us, may furnish. On Monday next, at the latest, I expect to be with you. Our Scotch tour under these circumstances, must be short. By Christmas it will be fit that the new councillor should leave England. His functions in India commence next April. We shall leave our dear Margaret, I hope, a happy mother.

Farewell, my dear sister. You cannot tell how impatiently I shall wait for your answer. T. B. M.

TO MACVEY NAPIER

LONDON, October 21st, 1833.

DEAR NAPIER, — I am glad to learn that you like my article. I like it myself, which is not much my habit. Very likely the public, which has often been kinder to my performances than I was, may on this, as on other occasions, differ from me in opinion. If the paper has any merit, it owes it to the delay of which you must, I am sure, have complained very bitterly in your heart. I was so thoroughly dissatisfied with the article as it stood at first that I completely rewrote it; altered the whole arrangement; left out ten or twelve pages in one part; and added twice as many in another. I never wrote anything so slowly as the first half, or so rapidly as the last half.

You are in an error about Akenside, which I must clear up for his credit, and for mine. You are confounding the Ode to Curio and the Epistle to Curio. The latter is generally printed at the end of Akenside's works, and is, I think, the best thing that he ever wrote. The Ode is worthless. It is merely an abridgment of the Epistle, executed in the most unskilful way. Johnson says, in his Life of Akenside,[1] that no poet ever so much mistook his powers as Akenside, when he took to lyric composition. "Having," I think the words are, "written with great force and poignancy his Epistle to Curio, he afterward transformed it into an ode only disgraceful to its author."

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[1] "Akenside was one of the fiercest and the most uncompromising of the young patriots out of Parliament. When he found that the change of administration had produced no change of system, he gave vent to his indignation in the Epistle to Curio, the best poem that he ever wrote; a poem, indeed, which seems to indicate that if he had left lyrical composition to Gray and Collins, and had employed his powers in grave and elevated satire, he might have disputed the preëminence of Dryden." (Macaulay's Essay on Horace Walpole.)

When I said that Chesterfield[1] had lost by the publication of his Letters, I of course considered that he had much to lose; that he has left an immense reputation, founded on the testimony of all his contemporaries of all parties, for wit, taste, and eloquence; that what remains of his parliamentary oratory is superior to anything of that time that has come down to us, except a little of Pitt's. The utmost that can be said of the letters is that they are the letters of a cleverish man; and there are not many which are entitled even to that praise. I think he would have stood higher if we had been left to judge of his powers — as we judge of those of Chatham, Mansfield, Charles Townshend, and many others — only by tradition, and by fragments of speeches preserved in parliamentary reports.

I said nothing about Lord Byron's criticism on Walpole, because I thought it, like most of his lordship's criticism, below refutation. On the drama Lord Byron wrote more nonsense than on any subject. He wanted to have restored the unities. His practice proved as unsuccessful as his theory was absurd. His admiration of The Mysterious Mother was of a piece with his thinking Gifford and Rogers greater poets than Wordsworth and Coleridge. Ever yours truly, T. B. MACAULAY.

TO HANNAH MORE MACAULAY

LONDON, November —, 1833.

DEAR HANNAH, — Things stand as they stood, except that the report of my appointment is every day spreading more widely, and that I am beset by advertising dealers, begging leave to make up a hundred cotton shirts for me and fifty muslin gowns for you, and by clerks out of place begging to be my secretaries. I am not in very high spirits to-day, as I have just received a letter from poor Ellis, to whom I had not communicated my intentions till yesterday. He writes so affectionately and so plaintively that he quite cuts me to the heart. There are few, indeed, from whom I shall part with so much pain; and he, poor fellow, says that, next to his wife, I am the person for whom he feels the most thorough attachment, and in whom he places the most unlimited confidence.

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[1] "Lord Chesterfield stands much lower in the estimation of posterity than he would have done if his Letters had never been published."

On the eleventh of this month there is to be a dinner given to Lushington by the electors of the Tower Hamlets. He has persecuted me with importunities to attend and make a speech for him, and my father has joined in the request. It is enough, in these times, Heaven knows, for a man who represents, as I do, a town of a hundred and twenty thousand people, to keep his own constituents in good humor; and the Spitalfields weavers and Whitechapel butchers are nothing to me. But, ever since I succeeded in what everybody allows to have been the most hazardous attempt of the kind ever made — I mean, in persuading an audience of manufacturers, all Whigs or Radicals, that the immediate alteration of the corn laws was impossible — I have been considered as a capital physician for desperate cases in politics. However — to return from that delightful theme, my own praises — Lushington, who is not very popular with the rabble of the Tower Hamlets, thinks that an oration from me would give him a lift. I could not refuse him directly, backed as he was by my father. I only said that I would attend if I were in London on the eleventh; but I added that, situated as I was, I thought it very probable that I should be out of town.

I shall go to-night to Miss Berry's soirée. I do not know whether I told you that she resented my article on Horace Walpole so much that Sir Stratford Canning advised me not to go near her. She was Walpole's greatest favorite. His Reminiscences are addressed to her in terms of the most gallant eulogy. When he was dying, at past eighty, he asked her to marry him, merely that he might make her a countess and leave her his fortune. You know that in Vivian Grey she is called Miss Otranto. I always expected that my article would put her into a passion, and I was not mistaken; but she has come round again, and sent me a most pressing and kind invitation the other day.

I have been racketing lately, having dined twice with Rogers and once with Grant. Lady Holland is in a most extraordinary state. She came to Rogers's, with Allen, in so bad a humor that we were all forced to rally and make common cause against her. There was not a person at table to whom she was not rude; and none of us were inclined to submit. Rogers sneered; Sydney made merciless sport of her; Tom Moore looked excessively impertinent; Bobus put her down with simple straightforward rudeness; and I treated her with what I meant to be the coldest civility. Allen flew into a rage with us all, and especially with Sydney, whose guffaws, as the Scotch say, were indeed tremendous. When she and all the rest were gone, Rogers made Tom Moore and me sit down with him for half an hour, and we coshered over the events of the evening. Rogers said that he thought Allen's firing-up in defence of his patroness the best thing that he had seen in him. No sooner had Tom and I got into the street than he broke forth: "That such an old stager as Rogers should talk such nonsense, and give Allen credit for attachment to anything but his dinner! Allen was bursting with envy to see us so free, while he was conscious of his own slavery."

Her ladyship has been the better for this discipline. She has overwhelmed me ever since with attentions and invitations. I have at last found out the cause of her ill humor, or at least of that portion of it of which I was the object. She is in a rage at my article on Walpole, but at what part of it I cannot tell. I know that she is very intimate with the Waldegraves, to whom the manuscripts belong, and for whose benefit the letters were published. But my review was surely not calculated to injure the sale of the book. Lord Holland told me, in an aside, that he quite agreed with me, but that we had better not discuss the subject.

A note; and, by my life, from my Lady Holland: "Dear Mr. Macaulay, pray wrap yourself very warm, and come to us on Wednesday." No my good lady. I am engaged on Wednesday to dine at the Albion Tavern with the Directors of the East India Company — now my servants; next week, I hope, to be my masters.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME.

LONDON, November 22d, 1833.

MY DEAR SISTER, — The decision is postponed for a week; but there is no chance of an unfavorable result. The Chairs have collected the opinions of their brethren; and the result is, that, of the twenty-four directors, only six or seven at the most will vote against me.

I dined with the directors on Wednesday at the Albion Tavern. We had a company of about sixty persons, and many eminent military men among them. The very courteous manner in which several of the directors begged to be introduced to me, and drank my health at dinner, led me to think that the Chairs have not overstated the feeling of the court. One of them, an old Indian and a great friend of our uncle, the general, told me in plain words that he was glad to hear that I was to be in their service. Another, whom I do not even know by sight, pressed the chairman to propose my health. The chairman with great judgment refused. It would have been very awkward to have had to make a speech to them in the present circumstances.

Of course, my love, all your expenses, from the day of my appointment, are my affair. My present plan, formed after conversation with experienced East Indians, is not to burden myself with an extravagant outfit. I shall take only what will be necessary for the voyage. Plate, wine, coaches, furniture, glass, china, can be bought in Calcutta as well as in London. I shall not have money enough to fit myself out handsomely with such things here; and to fit myself out shabbily would be folly. I reckon that we can bring our whole expense for the passage within the £1200 allowed by the company. My calculation is that our cabins and board will cost £250 apiece. The passage of our servants £50 apiece. That makes up £600. My clothes and etceteras, as Mrs. Meeke[1] observes, will, I am quite sure, come within £200. Yours will, of course, be more. I will send you £300 to lay out as you like; not meaning to confine you to it, by any means; but you would probably prefer having a sum down to sending in your milliner's bills to me. I reckon my servant's outfit at £50; your maid's at as much more. The whole will be £1200.

One word about your maid. You really must choose with great caution. Hitherto the company has required that all ladies who take maid-servants with them from this country to India should give security to send them back within two years. The reason was, that no class of people misconducted themselves so much in the East as female servants from this country. They generally treat the natives with gross insolence; an insolence natural enough to people accustomed to stand in a subordinate relation to others when, for the first time, they find a great population placed in a servile relation toward them. Then, too, the state of society is such that they are very likely to become mistresses of the wealthy Europeans, and to flaunt about in magnificent palanquins, bringing discredit on their country by the immorality of their lives and the vulgarity of their manners. On these grounds the company has hitherto insisted upon their being sent back at the expense of those who take them out. The late act will enable your servant to stay in India, if she chooses to stay. I hope, therefore, that you will be careful in your selection. You see how much depends upon it. The happiness and concord of our native household, which will probably consist of sixty or seventy people, may be destroyed by her, if she should be ill-tempered and arrogant. If she should be weak and vain, she will probably form connections that will ruin her morals and her reputation. I am no preacher, as you very well know; but I have a strong sense of the responsibility under which we shall both lie with respect to a poor girl brought by us into the midst of temptations of which she cannot be aware, and which have turned many heads that might have been steady enough in a quiet nursery or kitchen in England.

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[1] Mrs. Meeke was his favorite among bad novel-writers.

To find a man and wife, both of whom would suit us, would be very difficult; and I think it right, also, to offer to my clerk to keep him in my service. He is honest, intelligent, and respectful; and as he is rather inclined to consumption, the change of climate would probably be useful to him. I cannot bear the thought of throwing any person who has been about me for five years, and with whom I have no fault to find, out of bread, while it is in my power to retain his services. Ever yours,

T. B. M.

TO THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE

London, December 5th, 1833.

Dear Lord Lansdowne, — I delayed returning an answer to your kind letter till this day, in order that I might be able to send you definitive intelligence. Yesterday evening the directors appointed me to a seat in the council of India. The votes were nineteen for me, and three against me.

I feel that the sacrifice which I am about to make is great. But the motives which urge me to make it are quite irresistible. Every day that I live I become less and less desirous of great wealth. But every day makes me more sensible of the importance of a competence. Without a competence it is not very easy for a public man to be honest: it is almost impossible for him to be thought so. I am so situated that I can subsist only in two ways: by being in office, and by my pen. Hitherto, literature has been merely my relaxation — the amusement of perhaps a month in the year. I have never considered it as the means of support. I have chosen my own topics, taken my own time, and dictated my own terms. The thought of becoming a bookseller's hack; of writing to relieve, not the fulness of the mind, but the emptiness of the pocket; of spurring a jaded fancy to reluctant exertion; of filling sheets with trash merely that the sheets may be filled; of bearing from publishers and editors what Dryden bore from Tonson, and what, to my own knowledge, Mackintosh bore from Lardner, is horrible to me. Yet thus it must be, if I should quit office. Yet to hold office merely for the sake of emolument would be more horrible still. The situation in which I have been placed for some time back would have broken the spirit of many men. It has rather tended to make me the most mutinous and unmanageable of the followers of the Government. I tendered my resignation twice during the course of the last session. I certainly should not have done so if I had been a man of fortune. You, whom malevolence itself could never accuse of coveting office for the sake of pecuniary gain, and whom your salary very poorly compensates for the sacrifice of ease and of your tastes to the public service, cannot estimate rightly the feelings of a man who knows that his circumstances lay him open to the suspicion of being actuated in his public conduct by the lowest motives. Once or twice, when I have been defending unpopular measures in the

House of Commons, that thought has disordered my ideas and deprived me of my presence of mind.

If this were all, I should feel that, for the sake of my own happiness and of my public utility, a few years would be well spent in obtaining an independence. But this is not all. I am not alone in the world. A family which I love most fondly is dependent on me. Unless I would see my father left in his old age to the charity of less near relations; my youngest brother unable to obtain a good professional education; my sisters, who are more to me than any sisters ever were to a brother, forced to turn governesses or humble companions, I must do something, I must make some effort. An opportunity has offered itself. It is in my power to make the last days of my father comfortable, to educate my brother, to provide for my sisters, to procure a competence for myself. I may hope, by the time I am thirty-nine or forty, to return to England with a fortune of thirty thousand pounds. To me that would be affluence. I never wished for more.

As far as English politics are concerned, I lose, it is true, a few years. But, if your kindness had not introduced me very early to Parliament, if I had been left to climb up the regular path of my profession, and to rise by my own efforts — I should have had very little chance of being in the House of Commons at forty. If I have gained any distinction in the eyes of my countrymen, if I have acquired any knowledge of parliamentary and official business, and any habitude for the management of great affairs, I ought to consider these things as clear gain.

Then, too, the years of my absence, though lost, as far as English politics are concerned, will not, I hope, be wholly lost as respects either my own mind or the happiness of my fellow creatures. I can scarcely conceive a nobler field than that which our Indian empire now presents to a statesman. While some of my partial friends are blaming me for stooping to accept a share in the government of that empire, I am afraid that I am aspiring too high for my qualifications. I sometimes feel, I most unaffectedly declare, depressed and appalled by the immense responsibility which I have undertaken. You are one of the very few public men of our time who have bestowed on Indian affairs the attention which they deserve; and you will therefore, I am sure, fully enter into my feelings.

And now, dear Lord Lansdowne, let me thank you most warmly for the kind feeling which has dictated your letter. That letter is, indeed, but a very small part of what I ought to thank you for. That at an early age I have gained some credit in public life; that I have done some little service to more than one good cause; that I now have it in my power to repair the ruined fortunes of my family, and to save those who are dearest to me from the misery and humiliation of dependence; that I am almost certain, if I live, of obtaining a competence by honorable means before I am past the full vigor of manhood — all this I owe to your kindness. I will say no more. I will only entreat you to believe that neither now, nor on any former occasion, have I ever said one thousandth part of what I feel.

If it will not be inconvenient to you, I propose to go to Bowood on Wednesday next. Labouchere will be my fellow traveler. On Saturday we must both return to town. Short as my visit must be, I look forward to it with great pleasure.

Believe me ever yours most faithfully and affectionately,
T. B. MACAULAY.

TO HANNAH M. MACAULAY

LONDON, December 5th, 1833.

MY DEAR SISTER, — I am overwhelmed with business, clearing off my work here, and preparing for my new functions. Plans of ships, and letters from captains, pour in without intermission. I really am mobbed with gentlemen begging to have the honor of taking me to India at my own time. The fact is, that a member of council is a great catch, not merely on account of the high price which he directly pays for accommodation, but because other people are attracted by him. Every father of a young writer or a young cadet likes to have his son on board the same vessel with the great man, to dine at the same table, and to have a chance of attracting his notice. Everything in India is given by the governor in council; and, though I have no direct voice in the disposal of patronage, my indirect influence may be great.

Grant's kindness through all these negotiations has been such as I really cannot describe. He told me yesterday, with tears in his eyes, that he did not know what the Board would do without me. I attribute his feeling partly to Robert Grant's absence; not that Robert ever did me ill offices with him — far from it; but Grant's is a mind that cannot stand alone. It is — begging your pardon for my want of gallantry — a feminine mind. It turns, like ivy, to some support. When Robert is near him, he clings to Robert. Robert being away, he clings to me. This may be a weakness in a public man, but I love him the better for it.

I have lately met Sir James Graham at dinner. He took me aside, and talked to me on my appointment with a warmth of kindness which, though we have been always on good terms, surprised me. But the approach of a long separation, like the approach of death, brings out all friendly feelings with unusual strength. The Cabinet, he said, felt the loss strongly. It was great at the India Board, but in the House of Commons (he used the word over and over) irreparable. They all, however, he said, agreed that a man of honor could not make politics a profession unless he had a competence of his own, without exposing himself to privation of the severest kind. They felt that they had never had it in their power to do all they wished to do for me. They had no means of giving me a provision in England, and they could not refuse me what I asked in India. He said very strongly that they all thought that I judged quite wisely; and added that, if God heard his prayers and spared my health, I should make a far greater figure in public life than if I had remained during the next five or six years in England.

I picked up in a print shop the other day some superb views of the suburbs of Chowringhee, and the villas of the Garden Reach. Selina professes that she is ready to die with envy of the fine houses and verandas. I heartily wish we were back again in a nice plain brick house, three windows in front, in Cadogan Place or Russell Square, with twelve or fifteen hundred a year, and a spare bedroom (we, like Mrs. Norris,[1] must always have a spare bedroom) for Edward and Margaret. Love to them both.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO MACVEY NAPIER

LONDON, December 5th, 1833.

DEAR NAPIER, — You are probably not unprepared for what I am about to tell you. Yesterday evening the Directors of the East India Company elected me one of the members of the Supreme Council. It will, therefore, be necessary that in a few weeks, ten weeks at furthest, I should leave this country for a few years.

It would be mere affectation in me to pretend not to know that my support is of some importance to the Edinburgh Review. In the situation in which I shall now be placed, a connection with the Review will be of some importance to me. I know well how dangerous it is for a public man wholly to withdraw himself from the public eye. During an absence of six years, I run some risk of losing most of the distinction, literary and political, which I have acquired. As a means of keeping myself in the recollection of my countrymen during my sojourn abroad, the Review will be invaluable to me; nor do I foresee that there will be the slightest difficulty in my continuing to write for you at least as much as ever. I have thought over my late articles, and I really can scarcely call to mind a single sentence in any one of them which might not have been written at Calcutta as easily as in London. Perhaps in India I might not have the means of detecting two or three of the false dates in Croker's Boswell; but that would have been all. Very little, if any, of the effect of my most popular articles is produced either by minute research into rare books, or by allusions to mere topics of the day.

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[1] A leading personage in Miss Austen's Mansfield Park.

I think, therefore, that we might easily establish a commerce mutually beneficial. I shall wish to be supplied with all the good books which come out in this part of the world. Indeed, many books which in themselves are of little value, and which, if I were in England, I should not think it worth while to read, will be interesting to me in India; just as the commonest daubs and the rudest vessels at Pompeii attract the minute attention of people who would not move their eyes to see a modern signpost or a modern kettle. Distance of place, like distance of time, makes trifles valuable.

What I propose, then, is that you should pay me for the articles which I may send you from India, not in money, but in books. As to the amount I make no stipulations. You know that I have never haggled about such matters. As to the choice of books, the mode of transmission, and other matters, we shall have ample time to discuss them before my departure. Let me know whether you are willing to make an arrangement on this basis.

I have not forgotten Chatham in the midst of my avocations. I hope to send you an article on him early next week.

Ever yours sincerely,

T. B. Macaulay.

TO HANNAH M. MACAULAY

LONDON, January 2d, 1834.

MY DEAR SISTER, — I am busy with an article[1] for Napier. I cannot in the least tell at present whether I shall like it or not. I proceed with great ease; and in general I have found that the success of my writings has been in proportion to the ease with which they have been written.

I had a most extraordinary scene with Lady Holland. If she had been as young and handsome as she was thirty years ago, she would have turned my head. She was quite hysterical about my going; paid me such compliments as I cannot repeat; cried; raved; called me dear, dear Macaulay. "You are sacrificed to your family. I see it all. You are too good to them. They are always making a tool of you; last session about the slaves; and now sending you to India!" I always do my best to keep my temper with Lady Holland, for three reasons: because she is a woman; because she is very unhappy in her health, and in the circumstances of her position; and because she has a real kindness for me. But at last she said something about you. This was too much, and I was beginning to answer her in a voice trembling with anger, when she broke out again: "I beg your pardon. Pray forgive me, dear Macaulay. I was very impertinent. I know you will forgive me. Nobody has such a temper as you. I have said so a hundred times. I said so to Allen only this morning. I am sure you will bear with my weakness. I shall never see you again;" and she cried, and I cooled; for it would have been to very little purpose to be angry with her. I hear that it is not to me alone that she runs on in this way. She storms at the ministers for letting me go. I was told that at one dinner she became so violent that even Lord Holland, whose temper, whatever his wife may say, is much cooler than mine, could not command himself, and broke out: "Don't talk such nonsense, my lady. What, the devil! Can we tell a gentleman who has a claim upon us that he must lose his only chance of getting an independence in order that he may come and talk to you in an evening?"

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[1] The first article on Lord Chatham.

Good-by, and take care not to become so fond of your own will as my lady. It is now my duty to omit no opportunity of giving you wholesome advice. I am henceforward your sole guardian. I have bought Gisborne's Duties of Women, Moore's Fables for the Female Sex, Mrs. King's Female Scripture Characters, and Fordyce's Sermons. With the help of these books I hope to keep my responsibility in order on our voyage, and in India.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO MACVEY NAPIER

London, February 13th, 1834.

Dear Napier, — It is true that I have been severely tried by ill health during the last few weeks; but I am now rapidly recovering, and am assured by all my medical advisers that a week of the sea will make me better than ever I was in my life.

I have several subjects in my head. One is Mackintosh's History; I mean the fragment of the large work. Another plan which I have is a very fine one, if it could be well executed. I think that the time is come when a fair estimate may be formed of the intellectual and moral character of Voltaire. The extreme veneration with which he was regarded during his lifetime has passed away; the violent reaction which followed has spent itself; and the world can now, I think, bear to hear the truth, and to see the man exhibited as he was — a strange mixture of greatness and littleness, virtues and vices. I have all his works, and shall take them in my cabin on the voyage. But my library is not particularly rich in those books which illustrate the literary history of his times. I have

Rousseau and Marmontel's Memoirs, and Madame du Deffand's Letters, and perhaps a few other works which would be of use. But Grimm's Correspondence, and several other volumes of memoirs and letters, would be necessary. If you would make a small collection of the works which would be most useful in this point of view, and send it after me as soon as possible, I will do my best to draw a good Voltaire. I fear that the article must be enormously long — seventy pages, perhaps ; but you know that I do not run into unnecessary lengths.

I may perhaps try my hand on Miss Austen's novels. That is a subject on which I shall require no assistance from books.

Whatever volumes you may send me ought to be half bound ; or the white ants will devour them before they have been three days on shore. Besides the books which may be necessary for the Review, I should like to have any work of very striking merit which may appear during my absence. The particular department of literature which interests me most is history ; above all, English history. Any valuable book on that subject I should wish to possess. Sharp, Miss Berry, and some of my other friends, will perhaps, now and then, suggest a book to you. But it is principally on your own judgment that I must rely to keep me well supplied.

Yours most truly, T. B. MACAULAY.

[Macaulay and his sister left England the middle of February, 1833. It was the 10th of June when the vessel reached Madras.]

TO THOMAS FLOWER ELLIS

OOTACAMUND, July 1st, 1834.

DEAR ELLIS, — You need not get your map to see where Ootacamund is, for it has not found its way into the maps. It is a new discovery ; a place to which Europeans resort for their health, or, as it is called by the Company's servants — blessings on their learning ! — a *sanate-*

rion. It lies at the height of seven thousand feet above the sea.[1]

While London is a perfect gridiron, here am I, at 13° north from the equator, by a blazing wood fire, with my windows closed. My bed is heaped with blankets, and my black servants are coughing round me in all directions. One poor fellow in particular looks so miserably cold that, unless the sun comes out, I am likely soon to see under my own roof the spectacle which, according to Shakespeare, is so interesting to the English[2] — a dead Indian.

I travelled the whole four hundred miles between this and Madras on men's shoulders. I had an agreeable journey, on the whole. I was honored by an interview with the Rajah of Mysore, who insisted on showing me all his wardrobe, and his picture gallery. He has six or seven colored English prints not much inferior to those which I have seen in the sanded parlor of a country inn: Going to Cover, The Death of the Fox, and so forth. But the bijou of his gallery, of which he is as vain as the grand duke can be of Venus, or Lord Carlisle of The Three Maries, is a head of the Duke of Wellington, which has most certainly been on a signpost in England.

Yet, after all, the rajah was by no means the greatest fool whom I found at Mysore. I alighted at a bungalow appertaining to the British Residency. There I found an Englishman who, without any preface, accosted me thus: "Pray, Mr. Macaulay, do not you think that Bonaparte was the Beast?" "No, sir, I cannot say that I do." "Sir, he was the Beast. I can prove it. I have found the number 666 in his name. Why, sir, if he was not the Beast, who was?" This was a puzzling question, and I am not a little vain of my answer. "Sir," said I, "the House of Commons is the Beast. There are 658 members of the House: and these, with their chief officers — the three clerks, the sergeant and his deputy, the chaplain, the door-keeper, and the librarian — make 666." "Well, sir, that is strange. But I can assure you that, if you write Napoleon Bonaparte in Arabic, leaving out only two letters, it will give 666." "And, pray, sir, what right have you to leave out two letters? And, as St. John was writing Greek and to Greeks, is it not likely that he would use the Greek rather than the Arabic notation?" "But, sir," said this learned divine, "everybody knows that the Greek letters were never used to mark numbers." I answered with the meekest look and voice possible: "I do not think that everybody knows that. Indeed, I have reason to believe that a different opinion — erroneous, no doubt — is universally embraced by all the small minority who happen to know any Greek." So ended the controversy. The man looked at me as if he thought me a very wicked fellow; and, I dare say, has by this time discovered that, if you write my name in Tamul, leaving out T in Thomas, B in Babington, and M in Macaulay, it will give the number of this unfortunate Beast.

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[1] [In the Neilgherry Hills, where at the time was Lord William Bentinck, governor-general of India, who had sent for Macaulay.]

[2] The Tempest, II. ii.

I am very comfortable here. The governor-general is the frankest and best-natured of men. The chief functionaries who have attended him hither are clever people, but not exactly on a par as to general attainments with the society to which I belonged in London. I thought, however, even at Madras, that I could have formed a very agreeable circle of acquaintance; and I am assured that at Calcutta I shall find things far better. After all, the best rule in all parts of the world, as in London itself, is to be independent of other men's minds. My power of finding amusement without companions was pretty well tried on my voyage. I read insatiably; the Iliad and Odyssey, Virgil, Horace, Cæsar's Commentaries, Bacon, De Augmentis, Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, Tasso, Don Quixote, Gibbon's Rome, Mill's India, all the seventy volumes of Voltaire, Sismondi's History of France, and the seven thick folios of the Biographia Britannica. I found my Greek and Latin in good condition enough. I liked the Iliad, a little less, and the Odyssey a great deal more, than formerly. Horace charmed me more than ever; Virgil not quite so much as he used to do. The want of human character, the poverty of his supernatural machinery, struck me very strongly. Can anything be so bad as the living bush which bleeds and talks, or the Harpies who befoul Æneas's dinner? It is as extravagant as Ariosto, and as dull as Wilkie's Epigoniad. The last six books which Virgil had not fully corrected pleased me better than the first six. I like him best on Italian ground. I like his localities; his national enthusiasm; his frequent allusions to his country, its history, its antiquities, and its greatness. In this respect he often reminded me of Sir Walter Scott, with whom, in the general character of his mind, he had very little affinity. The Georgics pleased me better; the Eclogues best — the second and tenth above all. But I think that the finest lines in the Latin language are those five which begin: —

"Sepibus in nostris parvam te roscida mala."[1]

I cannot tell you how they struck me. I was amused to find that Voltaire pronounces that passage to be the finest in Virgil.

I liked the Jerusalem better than I used to do. I was enraptured with Ariosto; and I still think of Dante, as I thought when I first read him, that he is a superior poet to Milton; that he runs neck and neck with Homer; and that none but Shakespeare has gone decidedly beyond him.

As soon as I reach Calcutta I intend to read Herodotus again. By the bye, why do not you translate him? You would do it excellently; and a translation of Herodotus, well executed, would rank with original compositions. A quarter of an hour a day would finish the work in five years. The notes might be made the most amusing in the world. I wish you would think of it. At all events I hope you will do something which may interest more than seven or eight people. Your talents are too great, and your leisure time too small to be wasted in inquiries so frivolous (I must call them) as those in which you have of late been too much engaged — whether the Cherokees are of the same race with the Chickasaws; whether Van Diemen's Land was peopled from New Holland, or New Holland from Van Diemen's Land; what is the precise mode of appointing a head-man in a village in Timbuctoo. I would not give the worst page in Clarendon or Fra Paolo for all that ever was or ever will be written about the migrations of the Leleges and the laws of the Oscans.

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[1] Eclogue viii. 37.

I have already entered on my public functions, and I hope to do some good. The very wigs of the judges in the Court of King's Bench would stand on end if they knew how short a chapter my Law of Evidence will form. I am not without many advisers. A native of some fortune at Madras has sent me a paper on legislation. "Your honor must know," says this judicious person, "that the great evil is that men swear falsely in this country. No judge knows what to believe. Surely, if your honor can make men to swear truly, your honor's fame will be great, and the company will flourish. Now, I know how men may be made to swear truly; and I will tell your honor, for your fame, and for the profit of the company. Let your honor cut off the great toe of the right foot of every man who swears falsely, whereby your honor's fame will be extended." Is not this an exquisite specimen of legislative wisdom?

I must stop. When I begin to write to England, my pen runs as if it would run on forever.

Ever yours affectionately, T. B. M.

TO MISS FANNY AND MISS SELINA MACAULAY

OOTACAMUND, August 10th, 1834.

MY DEAR SISTERS, — I sent last month a full account of my journey hither, and of the place, to Margaret, as the most stationary of our family; desiring her to let you all see what I had written to her. I think that I shall continue to take the same course. It is better to write one full and connected narrative than a good many imperfect fragments.

Money matters seem likely to go on capitally. My expenses, I find, will be smaller than I anticipated. The rate of exchange, if you know what that means, is very favorable indeed; and, if I live, I shall get rich fast. I quite enjoy the thought of appearing in the light of an old hunks who knows on which side his bread is buttered; a warm man; a fellow who will cut up well. This is not a character which the Macaulays have been much in the habit of sustaining; but I can assure you that after next Christmas I expect to lay up on an average about seven thousand pounds a year, while I remain in India.

At Christmas I shall send home a thousand or twelve hundred pounds for my father, and you all. I cannot tell you what a comfort it is to me to find that I shall be able to do this. It reconciles me to all the pains — acute enough, sometimes, God knows — of banishment. In a few years, if I live — probably in less than five years from the time at which you will be reading this letter — we shall be again together in a comfortable, though a modest, home; certain of a good fire, a good joint of meat, and a good glass of wine; without owing obligations to anybody; and perfectly indifferent, at least as far as our pecuniary interest is concerned, to the changes of the political world. Rely on it, my dear girls, that there is no chance of my going back with my heart cooled toward you. I came hither principally to save my family, and I am not likely while here to forget them.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO MRS. MARGARET CROPPER

CALCUTTA, December 7th, 1834.

DEAREST MARGARET, — I rather suppose that some late letters from Nancy may have prepared you to learn what I am now about to communicate. She is going to be married, and with my fullest and warmest approbation. I can truly say that, if I had to search India for a husband for her, I could have found no man to whom I could with equal confidence have entrusted her happiness. Trevelyan is about eight-and-twenty. He was educated at the Charterhouse, and then went to Haileybury, and came out hither. In this country he has distinguished himself beyond any man of his standing by his great talent for business; by his liberal and enlarged views of policy; and by literary merit, which, for his opportunities, is considerable. He was at first placed at Delhi under Sir Edward Colebrooke, a very powerful and a very popular man, but extremely corrupt. This man tried to initiate Trevelyan in his own infamous practices; but the young fellow's spirit was too noble for such things. When only twenty-one years of age, he publicly accused Sir Edward, then almost at the head of the service, of receiving bribes from the natives. A perfect storm was raised against the accuser. He was almost everywhere abused, and very generally cut. But, with a firmness and ability scarcely ever seen in any man so young, he brought his proofs forward, and, after an inquiry of some weeks, fully made out his case. Sir Edward was dismissed in disgrace, and is now living obscurely in England. The Government here, and the directors at home, applauded Trevelyan in the highest terms; and from that time he has been considered as a man likely to rise to the very top of the service. Lord William told him to ask for anything that he wished for. Trevelyan begged that something might be done for his elder brother, who is in the company's army. Lord William told him that he had richly earned that, or anything else, and gave Lieutenant Trevelyan a very good diplomatic employment. Indeed, Lord William, a man who makes no favorites, has always given to Trevelyan the strongest marks, not of a blind partiality, but of a thoroughly well-grounded and discriminating esteem.

Not long ago Trevelyan was appointed by him to the under secretaryship for foreign affairs, an office of a very important and confidential nature. While holding the place, he was commissioned to report to Government on the operation of the internal transit duties of India. About a year ago his report was completed. I shall send to England a copy or two of it by the first safe conveyance, for nothing that I can say of his abilities or of his public spirit will be half so satisfactory. I have no hesitation in affirming that it is a perfect masterpiece in its kind. Accustomed as I have been to public affairs, I never read an abler state paper; and I do not believe that there is, I will not say in India, but in England, another man of twenty-seven who could have written it. Trevelyan is a most stormy reformer. Lord William said to me before any one had observed Trevelyan's attentions to Nancy, "That man is almost always on the right side in every question; and it is well that he is so, for he gives a most confounded deal of trouble when he happens to take the wrong one."[1] He is quite at the head of that active party among the younger servants of the company who take the side of improvement. In particular, he is the soul of every scheme for diffusing education among the natives of this country. His reading has been very confined; but to the little that he has read he has brought a mind as active and restless as Lord Brougham's, and much more judicious and honest.

As to his person, he always looks like a gentleman, particularly on horseback. He is very active and athletic, and is renowned as a great master in the most exciting and perilous of field sports, the spearing of wild boars. His face has a most characteristic expression of ardor and impetuosity, which makes his countenance very interesting to me. Birth is a thing that I care nothing about; but his family is one of the oldest and best in England.

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[1] Macaulay used to apply to his future brother-in-law the remark which Julius Cæsar made with regard to his young friend Brutus: "Magni refert hic quid velit. Quidquid volet, valdè volet."

During the important years of his life, from twenty to twenty-five, or thereabouts, Trevelyan was in a remote province of India, where his whole time was divided between public business and field sports, and where he seldom saw a European gentleman, and never a European lady. He has no small talk. His mind is full of schemes of moral and political improvement, and his zeal boils over in his talk. His topics, even in courtship, are steam navigation, the education of the natives, the equalization of the sugar duties, the substitution of the Roman for the Arabic alphabet in the Oriental languages.

I saw the feeling growing from the first; for, though I generally pay not the smallest attention to those matters, I had far too deep an interest in Nancy's happiness not to watch her behavior to everybody who saw much of her. I knew it, I believe, before she knew it herself; and I could most easily have prevented it by merely treating Trevelyan with a little coldness, for he is a man whom the smallest rebuff would completely discourage. But you will believe, my dearest Margaret, that no thought of such base selfishness ever passed through my mind. I would as soon have locked my dear Nancy up in a nunnery as have put the smallest obstacle in the way of her having a good husband. I therefore gave every facility and encouragement to both of them. What I have myself felt, it is unnecessary to say. My parting from you almost broke my heart. But when I parted from you I had Nancy; I had all my other relations; I had my friends; I had my country. Now I have nothing except the resources of my own mind, and the consciousness of having acted not ungenerously. But I do not repine. Whatever I suffer I have brought on myself. I have neglected the plainest lessons of reason and experience. I have staked my happiness without calculating the chances of the dice. I have hewn out broken cisterns; I have leaned on a reed; I have built on the sand; and I have fared accordingly. I must bear my punishment as I can; and, above all, I must take care that the punishment does not extend beyond myself.

Nothing can be kinder than Nancy's conduct has been. She proposes that we should form one family; and Trevelyan (though like most lovers, he would, I imagine, prefer having his goddess to himself) consented with strong expressions of pleasure. The arrangement is not so strange as it might seem at home. The thing is often done here; and those quarrels between servants, which would inevitably mar any such plan in England, are not to be apprehended in an Indian establishment. One advantage there will be in our living together of a most incontestable sort — we shall both be able to save more money. Trevelyan will soon be entitled to his furlough; but he proposes not to take it till I go home.

I shall write in a very different style from this to my father. To him I shall represent the marriage as what it is in every respect except its effect on my own dreams of happiness — a most honorable and happy event; prudent in a worldly point of view; and promising all the felicity which strong mutual affection, excellent principles on both sides, good temper, youth, health, and the general approbation of friends can afford. As for myself, it is a tragical dénouement of an absurd plot. I remember quoting some nursery rhymes, years ago, when you left me in London to join Nancy at Rothley Temple or Leamington, I forget which. Those foolish lines contain the history of my life.

"There were two birds that sat on a stone:
One flew away, and there was but one.
The other flew away, and then there was none;
And the poor stone was left all alone."

Ever, my dearest Margaret, yours,

T. B. Macaulay.

TO THOMAS FLOWER ELLIS

Calcutta, December 15th, 1834.

Dear Ellis, — Many thanks for your letter. It is delightful in this strange land to see the handwriting of such a friend. We must keep up our spirits. We shall meet, I trust, in little more than four years, with feelings of regard only strengthened by our separation. My spirits are not bad; and they ought not to be bad. I have health, affluence, consideration, great power to do good; functions which, while they are honorable and useful, are not painfully burdensome; leisure for study, good books, an unclouded and active mind, warm affections, and a very dear sister. There will soon be a change in my domestic arrangements. My sister is to be married next week. Her lover, who is lover enough to be a knight of the Round Table, is one of the most distinguished of our young civilians. I have the very highest opinion of his talents both for action and for discussion. Indeed, I should call him a man of real genius. He is also, what is even more important, a man of the utmost purity of honor, of a sweet temper, and of strong principle. His public virtue has gone through very severe trials, and has come out resplendent. Lord William, in congratulating me the other day, said that he thought my destined brother-in-law the ablest young man in the service. His name is Trevelyan. He is a nephew of Sir John Trevelyan, a baronet — in Cornwall, I suppose, by the name; for I never took the trouble to ask.

He and my sister will live with me during my stay here. I have a house about as large as Lord Dudley's in

Park Lane, or rather larger, so that I shall accommodate them without the smallest difficulty. This arrangement is acceptable to me, because it saves me from the misery of parting with my sister in this strange land; and is, I believe, equally gratifying to Trevelyan, whose education, like that of other Indian servants, was huddled up hastily at home; who has an insatiable thirst for knowledge of every sort; and who looks on me as little less than an oracle of wisdom. He came to me the other morning to know whether I would advise him to keep up his Greek, which he feared he had nearly lost. I gave him Homer, and asked him to read a page; and I found that, like most boys of any talent who had been at the Charterhouse, he was very well grounded in that language. He read with perfect rapture, and has marched off with the book, declaring that he shall never be content till he has finished the whole. This, you will think, is not a bad brother-in-law for a man to pick up in 22 degrees of north latitude, and 100 degrees of east longitude.

I read much, and particularly Greek; and I find that I am, in all essentials, still not a bad scholar. I could, I think, with a year's hard study, qualify myself to fight a good battle for a Craven's scholarship. I read, however, not as I read at college, but like a man of the world. If I do not know a word, I pass it by unless it is important to the sense. If I find, as I have of late often found, a passage which refuses to give up its meaning at the second reading, I let it alone. I have read during the last fortnight, before breakfast, three books of Herodotus, and four plays of Æschylus. My admiration of Æschylus has been prodigiously increased by this reperusal. I cannot conceive how any person of the smallest pretension to taste should doubt about his immeasurable superiority to every poet of antiquity, Homer only excepted. Even Milton, I think, must yield to him. It is quite unintelligible to me that the ancient critics should have placed him so low. Horace's notice of him in the Ars

Poetica is quite ridiculous. There is, to be sure, the "magnum loqui;" but the great topic insisted on is the skill of Æschylus as a manager, as a property-man; the judicious way in which he boarded the stage; the masques, the buskins, and the dresses. And, after all, the "magnum loqui," though the most obvious characteristic of Æschylus, is by no means his highest or his best. Nor can I explain this by saying that Horace had too tame and unimaginative a mind to appreciate Æschylus. Horace knew what he could himself do, and, with admirable wisdom, he confined himself to that; but he seems to have had a perfectly clear comprehension of the merit of those great masters whom he never attempted to rival. He praised Pindar most enthusiastically. It seems incomprehensible to me that a critic who admired Pindar should not admire Æschylus far more.

Greek reminds me of Cambridge and of Thirlwall, and of Wordsworth's unutterable baseness and dirtiness.[1] When you see Thirlwall, tell him that I congratulate him from the bottom of my soul on having suffered in so good a cause; and that I would rather have been treated as he has been treated, on such an account, than have the mastership of Trinity. There would be some chance for the Church, if we had more Churchmen of the same breed, worthy successors of Leighton and Tillotson.

From one Trinity fellow I pass to another. (This letter is quite a study to a metaphysician who wishes to illustrate the law of association.) We have no official tidings yet of Malkin's appointment to the vacant seat on the bench at Calcutta. I cannot tell you how delighted

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[1] The subjoined extract from the letter of a leading member of Trinity College explains Macaulay's not unrighteous indignation: "Thirlwall published a pamphlet in 1834, on the admission of Dissenters to the university. The result was that he was either deprived of his assistant tutorship by the master, Wordsworth, or had to give it up. Whewell, also, was supposed to have behaved badly in not standing up for him. Thirlwall left Cambridge soon afterward. I suppose that if he had remained he would have been very possibly Wordsworth's successor in the mastership."

I am at the prospect of having him here. An honest, enlightened judge, without professional narrowness, is the very man whom we want, on public grounds. And as to my private feelings, nothing could be more agreeable to me than to have an old friend, and so estimable a friend, brought so near to me in this distant country.

Ever, dear Ellis, yours very affectionately,

T. B. MACAULAY.

TO THE SAME

CALCUTTA, February 8th, 1835.

DEAR ELLIS, — The last month has been the most painful I ever went through. Indeed, I never knew before what it was to be miserable. Early in January, letters from England brought me news of the death of my youngest sister.[1] What she was to me no words can express. I will not say she was dearer to me than anything in the world, for my sister who was with me was equally dear; but she was as dear to me as one human being can be to another. Even now, when time has begun to do its healing office, I cannot write about her without being altogether unmanned. That I have not utterly sunk under this blow I owe chiefly to literature. What a blessing it is to love books as I love them — to be able to converse with the dead, and to live amidst the unreal! Many times during the last few weeks I have repeated to myself those fine lines of old Hesiod: —

εἰ γάρ τις καὶ πένθος ἔχων νεοκηδέϊ θυμῷ
ἄζηται κραδίην ἀκαχήμενος, αὐτὰρ ἀοιδὸς
μουσάων θεράπων κλεῖα προτέρων ἀνθρώπων
ὑμνήσῃ, μάκαράς τε θεοὺς οἳ Ὄλυμπον ἔχουσι,
αἶψ᾽ ὅγε δυσφρονέων ἐπιλήθεται, οὐδέ τι κηδέων
μέμνηται · ταχέως δὲ παρέτραπε δῶρα θεάων·[2]

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[1] [Margaret Macaulay, Mrs. Cropper.]

[2] "For if to one whose grief is fresh, as he sits silent with sorrow-stricken heart, a minstrel, the henchman of the Muses, celebrates the men of old and the gods who possess Olympus, straightway he forgets his melancholy, and remembers not at all his grief, beguiled by the blessed gift of the goddesses of song." In Macaulay's Hesiod this passage is scored with three lines in pencil.

I have gone back to Greek literature with a passion quite astonishing to myself. I have never felt anything like it. I was enraptured with Italian during the six months which I gave up to it; and I was little less pleased with Spanish. But when I went back to the Greek, I felt as if I had never known before what intellectual enjoyment was. Oh that wonderful people! There is not one art, not one science, about which we may not use the same expression which Lucretius has employed about the victory over superstition, "Primum Graius homo."

I think myself very fortunate in having been able to return to these great masters while still in the full vigor of life, and when my taste and judgment are mature. Most people read all the Greek that they ever read before they are five-and-twenty. They never find time for such studies afterward till they are in the decline of life; and then their knowledge of the language is in a great measure lost, and cannot easily be recovered. Accordingly, almost all the ideas that people have of Greek literature are ideas formed while they were still very young. A young man, whatever his genius may be, is no judge of such a writer as Thucydides. I had no high opinion of him ten years ago. I have now been reading him with a mind accustomed to historical researches and to political affairs, and I am astonished at my own former blindness, and at his greatness. I could not bear Euripides at college. I now read my recantation. He has faults, undoubtedly. But what a poet! The Medea, the Alcestis the Troades, the Bacchæ, are alone sufficient to place him in the very first rank. Instead of depreciating him, as I have done, I may, for aught I know, end by editing him.

I have read Pindar — with less pleasure than I feel in reading the great Attic poets, but still with admiration. An idea occurred to me which may very likely have been noticed by a hundred people before. I was always puzzled to understand the reason for the extremely abrupt transitions in those Odes of Horace which are meant to be particularly fine. The "justum et tenacem" is an instance. All at once you find yourself in heaven, Heaven knows how. What the firmness of just men in times of tyranny or of tumult has to do with Juno's oration about Troy, it is hardly possible to conceive. Then, again, how strangely the fight between the Gods and the Giants is tacked on to the fine hymn to the Muses in that noble ode, Descende cœlo et dic age tibiâ! This always struck me as a great fault, and an inexplicable one; for it is peculiarly alien from the calm good sense and good taste which distinguished Horace.

My explanation of it is this: The Odes of Pindar were the acknowledged models of lyric poetry. Lyric poets imitated his manner as closely as they could; and nothing was more remarkable in his compositions than the extreme violence and abruptness of the transitions. This in Pindar was quite natural and defensible. He had to write an immense number of poems on subjects extremely barren, and extremely monotonous. There could be little difference between one boxing-match and another. Accordingly, he made all possible haste to escape from the immediate subject, and to bring in, by hook or by crook, some local description; some old legend; something or other, in short, which might be more susceptible of poetical embellishment, and less utterly threadbare, than the circumstances of a race or a wrestling-match. This was not the practice of Pindar alone. There is an old story which proves that Simonides did the same, and that sometimes the hero of the day was nettled at finding how little was said about him in the ode for which he was to pay. This abruptness of transition was, therefore, in the Greek lyric poets, a fault rendered inevitable by the peculiarly barren and uniform nature of the subjects which they had to treat. But, like many other faults of great masters, it appeared to their imitators a beauty; and a beauty almost essential to the grander ode. Horace was perfectly at liberty to choose his own subjects, and to treat them after his own fashion. But he confounded what was merely accidental in Pindar's manner with what was essential; and because Pindar, when he had to celebrate a foolish lad from Ægina who had tripped up another's heels at the Isthmus, made all possible haste to get away from so paltry a topic to the ancient heroes of the race of Æacus, Horace took it into his head that he ought always to begin as far from the subject as possible, and then arrive at it by some strange and sudden bound. This is my solution. At least I can find no better. The most obscure passage — at least the strangest passage — in all Horace may be explained by supposing that he was misled by Pindar's example: I mean that odd parenthesis in the Qualem Ministrum:

> "quibus
> Mos unde deductus per omne."

This passage,[1] taken by itself, always struck me as the harshest, queerest, and most preposterous digression in the world. But there are several things in Pindar very like it.

You must excuse all this, for I labor at present under a suppression of Greek, and am likely to do so for at least three years to come. Malkin may be some relief; but I am quite unable to guess whether he means to come to Calcutta. I am in excellent bodily health, and I am recovering my mental health; but I have been sorely tried. Money matters look well. My new brother-in-law and I are brothers in more than law. I am more comfortable than I expected to be in this country; and, as to the climate, I think it, beyond all comparison, better than that of the House of Commons.

Yours affectionately,

T. B. Macaulay.

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[1] Orelli makes an observation much to the same effect in his note on this passage in his edition of 1850.

TO THE SAME

CALCUTTA, August 25th, 1835.

DEAR ELLIS, — Cameron arrived here about a fortnight ago, and we are most actively engaged in preparing a complete criminal code for India. He and I agree excellently. Ryan, the most liberal of judges, lends us his best assistance. I heartily hope, and fully believe, that we shall put the whole penal law, and the whole law of criminal procedure, into a moderately sized volume. I begin to take a very warm interest in this work. It is, indeed, one of the finest employments of the intellect that it is easy to conceive. I ought, however, to tell you that the more progress I make as a legislator, the more intense my contempt for the mere technical study of law becomes.

I am deep in the examination of the political theories of the old philosophers. I have read Plato's Republic, and his Laws; and I am now reading Aristotle's Politics; after which I shall go through Plato's two treatises again. I every now and then read one of Plutarch's Lives on an idle afternoon; and in this way I have got through a dozen of them. I like him prodigiously. He is inaccurate, to be sure, and a romancer; but he tells a story delightfully, and his illustrations and sketches of character are as good as anything in ancient eloquence. I have never till now rated him fairly.

As to Latin, I am just finishing Lucan, who remains pretty much where he was in my opinion; and I am busily engaged with Cicero, whose character, moral and intellectual, interests me prodigiously. I think that I see the whole man through and through. But this is too vast a subject for a letter. I have gone through all Ovid's poems. I admire him; but I was tired to death before I got to the end. I amused myself one evening with turning over the Metamorphoses, to see if I could find any passage of ten lines which could, by possibility, have been written by Virgil. Whether I was in ill luck or no I cannot tell; but I hunted for half an hour without the smallest success. At last I chanced to light on a little passage more Virgilian, to my thinking, than Virgil himself. Tell me what you say to my criticism. It is part of Apollo's speech to the laurel.

> "Semper habebunt
> Te coma, te citharæ, te nostræ, laure, pharetræ.
> Tu ducibus Latiis aderis, cum læta triumphum
> Vox canet, et longas visent Capitolia pompas.
> Portibus Augustis eadem fidissima custos
> Ante fores stabis, mediamque tuebere quercum."

As to other Latin writers, Sallust has gone sadly down in my opinion. Cæsar has risen wonderfully. I think him fully entitled to Cicero's praise. He has won the honor of an excellent historian while attempting merely to give hints for history. But what are they all to the great Athenian? I do assure you that there is no prose composition in the world, not even the De Coronâ, which I place so high as the seventh book of Thucydides. It is the *ne plus ultra* of human art. I was delighted to find in Gray's letters the other day this query to Wharton: "The retreat from Syracuse — Is it, or is it not, the finest thing you ever read in your life?"

Did you ever read Athenæus through? I never did; but I am meditating an attack on him. The multitude of quotations looks very tempting; and I never open him for a minute without being paid for my trouble.

Yours very affectionately, T. B. MACAULAY.

TO THE SAME

CALCUTTA, December 30th, 1835.

DEAR ELLIS, — What the end of the Municipal Reform Bill is to be I cannot conjecture. Our latest English intelligence is of the fifteenth of August. The Lords[1] were then busy in rendering the only great service that I expect them ever to render to the nation; that is to say, in hastening the day of reckoning. But I will not fill my paper with English politics.

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[1] In the middle of August the Irish Tithe Bill went up to the House of Lords, where it was destined to undergo a mutilation which was fatal to its existence.

I am in excellent health. So are my sister and brother-in-law, and their little girl, whom I am always nursing; and of whom I am becoming fonder than a wise man, with half my experience, would choose to be of anything except himself. I have but very lately begun to recover my spirits. The tremendous blow which fell on me at the beginning of this year has left marks behind it which I shall carry to my grave. Literature has saved my life and my reason. Even now, I dare not, in the intervals of business, remain alone for a minute without a book in my hand. What my course of life will be when I return to England is very doubtful. But I am more than half determined to abandon politics, and to give myself wholly to letters; to undertake some great historical work which may be at once the business and the amusement of my life; and to leave the pleasures of pestiferous rooms, sleepless nights, aching heads, and diseased stomachs, to Roebuck and to Praed.

In England I might probably be of a very different opinion. But, in the quiet of my own little grass-plot — when the moon, at its rising, finds me with the Philoctetes or the De Finibus in my hand — I often wonder what strange infatuation leads men who can do something better, to squander their intellect, their health, their energy, on such objects as those which most statesmen are engaged in pursuing. I comprehend perfectly how a man who can debate, but who would make a very indifferent figure as a contributor to an annual or a magazine, — such a man as Stanley, for example, — should take the only line by which he can attain distinction. But that a man before whom the two paths of literature and politics lie open, and who might hope for eminence in either, should choose politics, and quit literature, seems to me madness.

On the one side are health, leisure, peace of mind, the search after truth, and all the enjoyments of friendship and conversation. On the other side are almost certain ruin to the constitution, constant labor, constant anxiety. Every friendship which a man may have becomes precarious as soon as he engages in politics. As to abuse, men soon become callous to it; but the discipline which makes them callous is very severe. And for what is it that a man, who might, if he chose, rise and lie down at his own hour, engage in any study, enjoy any amusement, and visit any place, consents to make himself as much a prisoner as if he were within the rules of the Fleet; to be tethered during eleven months of the year within the circle of half a mile round Charing Cross; to sit, or stand, night after night for ten or twelve hours, inhaling a noisome atmosphere, and listening to harangues of which nine tenths are far below the level of a leading article in a newspaper? For what is it that he submits, day after day, to see the morning break over the Thames, and then totters home, with bursting temples, to his bed? Is it for fame? Who would compare the fame of Charles Townshend to that of Hume, that of Lord North to that of Gibbon, that of Lord Chatham to that of Johnson? Who can look back on the life of Burke, and not regret that the years which he passed in ruining his health and temper by political exertions were not passed in the composition of some great and durable work? Who can read the letters to Atticus, and not feel that Cicero would have been an infinitely happier and better man, and a not less celebrated man, if he had left us fewer speeches and more Academic Questions and Tusculan Disputations? If he had passed the time which he spent in brawling with Vatinius and Clodius in producing a history of Rome superior even to that of Livy? But these, as I said, are meditations in a quiet garden, situated far beyond the contagious influence of English faction. What I might feel if I again saw Downing Street and Palace Yard is another question. I tell you sincerely my present feelings.

I have cast up my reading account, and brought it to the end of the year 1835. It includes December, 1834; for I came into my house and unpacked my books at the end of November, 1834. During the last thirteen months I have read Æschylus twice; Sophocles twice; Euripides once; Pindar twice; Callimachus; Apollonius Rhodius; Quintus Calaber; Theocritus twice; Herodotus; Thucydides; almost all Xenophon's works; almost all Plato; Aristotle's Politics, and a good deal of his Organon, besides dipping elsewhere in him; the whole of Plutarch's Lives; about half of Lucian; two or three books of Athenæus; Plautus twice; Terence twice; Lucretius twice; Catullus; Tibullus; Propertius; Lucan; Statius; Silius Italicus; Livy; Velleius Paterculus; Sallust; Cæsar; and, lastly, Cicero. I have, indeed, still a little of Cicero left; but I shall finish him in a few days. I am now deep in Aristophanes and Lucian. Of Aristophanes I think as I always thought; but Lucian has agreeably surprised me. At school I read some of his Dialogues of the Dead when I was thirteen; and, to my shame, I never, to the best of my belief, read a line of him since. I am charmed with him. His style seems to me to be superior to that of any extant writer who lived later than the age of Demosthenes and Theophrastus. He has a most peculiar and delicious vein of humor. It is not the humor of Aristophanes; it is not that of Plato; and yet it is akin to both: not quite equal, I admit, to either, but still exceedingly charming. I hardly know where to find an instance of a writer, in the decline of a literature, who has shown an invention so rich and a taste so pure. But if I get on these matters I shall fill sheet after sheet. They must wait till we take another long walk, or another tavern dinner, together; that is, till the summer of 1838.

I had a long story to tell you about a classical examination here; but I have not time. I can only say that some of the competitors tried to read the Greek with the papers upside down; and that the great man of the examination, the Thirlwall of Calcutta, a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, translated the words of Theophrastus, ὅσας λειτουργίας λελειτούργηκε, "how many times he has performed divine service." Ever yours affectionately,

T. B. MACAULAY.

TO MACVEY NAPIER

CALCUTTA, January 1st, 1836.

DEAR NAPIER, — I write in some haste, and without any particular news to communicate. But I am ashamed to let ship sail after ship without sending you a line, if for no other purpose, at least to thank you for your very kind and punctual attention to all my requests. All the books which you have sent have arrived safe and in excellent condition. I should be much obliged to you to tell Longman to procure for me Lysias, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and the fragment of Cicero de Republica. I am becoming a mere pedant, you will think. Not so, I hope. Yet I have returned to Greek and Latin literature with a zest stronger than I ever felt when at college. And I indulge my taste with the less scruple, because it is very improbable that I shall ever have an opportunity of doing so, if I neglect that which I now enjoy. In England I shall be distracted by all the gossip, political and literary, of the day. Here, when my official duties are performed, I have nothing to divert me from a connected course of study. I am up every morning before the sun; I have three or four hours without interruption for my books, and I do not know that I can spend them better than in going over all the best works which the ancients have left us.

I have received the Edinburgh Review containing my article on Mackintosh. I quite approve of your alterations. I have no intelligence as to the reception which the paper has met with at home. Here it is generally liked.

I am writing a review of Basil Montagu's Life of Lord Bacon. It will be immeasurably long, I fear, and very superficial in the philosophical part. But I rather think it will be liked. Perhaps you may already have published an article on the subject. If so, I shall still be amply repaid for the trouble which I have taken by the pleasure which the act of composition has given me. When I shall finish I cannot guess. I go on steadily, but slowly.

My health is as good as possible. Everything in my situation is agreeable. I have reason to hope that I shall be able to effect much practical good for this country. My efforts are heartily seconded by all those whose coöperation is of most importance. In two years I fully expect to be preparing for my return. When I reach home I hope to find you as well, and I am sure that I shall find you as friendly as when we last rambled together about your noble city. Pray assure Jeffrey that in every part of the world in which I may be, I shall continue to remember him with kindness. Ever yours truly,

T. B. Macaulay.

TO THOMAS FLOWER ELLIS

Calcutta, July 25th, 1836.

My dear Ellis, — I have heard from you again, and glad I always am to hear from you. There are few things to which I look forward with more pleasure than to our meeting. It is really worth while to go into banishment for a few years for the pleasure of going home again. Yet that home will in some things be a different home — oh, how different a home! — from that to which I expected to return. But I will not stir up the bitterness of sorrow which has at last subsided.

You take interest, I see, in my Greek and Latin studies. I continue to pursue them steadily and actively. I am now reading Demosthenes with interest and admiration indescribable. I am slowly, at odd minutes, getting through the stupid trash of Diodorus. I have read through Seneca, and an affected, empty scribbler he is. I have read Tacitus again, and, by the bye, I will tell you a curious circumstance relating to that matter. In my younger days I always thought the Annals a prodigiously superior work to the History. I was surprised to find that the Annals seemed cold and poor to me on the last reading. I began to think that I had overrated Tacitus. But, when I began the History, I was enchanted, and thought more highly of him than ever. I went back to the Annals, and liked them even better than the History. All at once the explanation of this occurred to me. While I was reading the Annals I was reading Thucydides. When I began the History, I began the Hellenics. What made the Annals appear cold and poor to me was the intense interest which Thucydides inspired. Indeed, what coloring is there which would not look tame when placed side by side with the magnificent light and the terrible shade of Thucydides? Tacitus was a great man; but he was not up to the Sicilian expedition. When I finished Thucydides, and took up Xenophon, the case was reversed. Tacitus had been a foil to Thucydides. Xenophon was a foil to Tacitus.

I have read Pliny the Younger. Some of the Epistles are interesting. Nothing more stupid than the Panegyric was ever preached in the University church. I am reading the Augustan History, and Aulus Gellius. Aulus is a favorite of mine. I think him one of the best writers of his class.

I read in the evenings a great deal of English, French, and Italian, and a little Spanish. I have picked up Portuguese enough to read Camoens with care, and I want no more. I have adopted an opinion about the Italian historians quite different from that which I formerly held, and which, I believe, is generally considered as orthodox. I place Fra Paolo decidedly at the head of them, and next to him Davila, whom I take to be the best modern military historian except Colonel Napier. Davila's battle of Ivry is worthy of Thucydides himself. Next to Davila I put Guicciardini, and last of all Machiavelli. But I do not think that you ever read much Italian.

The English poetry of the day has very few attractions for me. Van Artevelde is far the best specimen that I have lately seen. I do not much like Talfourd's Ion, but I mean to read it again. It contains pretty lines; but, to my thinking, it is neither fish nor flesh. There is too much and too little of the antique about it. Nothing but the most strictly classical costume can reconcile me to a mythological plot; and Ion is a modern philanthropist, whose politics and morals have been learned from the publications of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

I do not know whether the noise which the lawyers of the Supreme Court have been raising against our legislative authority has reached or will reach England. They held a public meeting, which ended — or rather began, continued, and ended — in a riot; and ever since then the leading agitators have been challenging each other, refusing each other's challenges, libelling each other, swearing the peace against each other, and blackballing each other. Mr. Longueville Clarke, who aspires to be the O'Connell of Calcutta, called another lawyer a liar. The last-mentioned lawyer challenged Mr. Longueville Clarke. Mr. Longueville Clarke refused to fight on the ground that his opponent had been guilty of hugging attorneys. The Bengal Club accordingly blackballed Longueville. This, and some other similar occurrences, have made the opposition here thoroughly ridiculous and contemptible. They will probably send a petition home; but unless the House of Commons has undergone a great change since 1833, they have no chance there.

I have almost brought my letter to a close without mentioning the most important matter about which I had to write. I dare say you have heard that my uncle, General Macaulay, who died last February, has left me

£10,000. This legacy, together with what I shall have saved by the end of 1837, will make me quite a rich man; richer than I even wish to be as a single man; and every day renders it more unlikely that I should marry.

We have had a very unhealthy season; but sickness has not come near our house. My sister, my brother-in-law, and their little child are as well as possible. As to me, I think that, as Bonaparte said of himself after the Russian campaign, "J'ai le diable au corps."

Ever yours affectionately,
T. B. MACAULAY.

TO MACVEY NAPIER

CALCUTTA, August 30th, 1836.

DEAR NAPIER, — I am quite ashamed of having done so little for you, and the more so as you have been most kindly attentive in supplying me with books. I hope in a few weeks to send you a prodigiously long article about Lord Bacon, which I think will be popular with the many, whatever the few who know something about the matter may think of it. I now send you an article which I think cannot fail to prove interesting. You have probably heard of the *Thugs*, a species of robbers and murderers who infest this country. Vigorous efforts have lately been made to put them down; and in the course of those efforts, the real nature of their confederacy has for the first time been discovered. I think that you will agree with me in pronouncing the long existence and the vast extent of this fraternity to be a phenomenon without a parallel in history. The government here have printed, but not published, a volume of papers respecting this strange race of men. The book is so ill arranged that, even if it were published, few people would read or understand it. But the information which is dispersed through it is in the highest degree curious and amusing. Lord Auckland observed to me the other day that it would be a matchless subject for a review. I was struck by the hint, and I begged my brother-in-law, Trevelyan, to try his hand. If I do not deceive myself, his paper cannot fail to be interesting even at home, where, as I well know, very little attention is paid to Indian subjects. I have had two or three copies of his article printed. One I have sent by the Cape, and with it a copy of the volume reviewed. If you do not like the paper,[1] you will not give the very smallest offence either to him or to me by rejecting it. Ever yours most truly,

T. B. Macaulay.

TO THE SAME

Calcutta, November 26th, 1836.

Dear Napier,— At last I send you an article of interminable length about Lord Bacon. I hardly know whether it is not too long for an article in a Review; but the subject is of such vast extent that I could easily have made the paper twice as long as it is.

About the historical and political part there is no great probability that we shall differ in opinion; but what I have said about Bacon's philosophy is widely at variance with what Dugald Stewart and Mackintosh have said on the same subject. I have not your essay; nor have I read it since I read it at Cambridge, with very great pleasure, but without any knowledge of the subject. I have at present only a very faint and general recollection of its contents, and have in vain tried to procure a copy of it here. I fear, however, that, differing widely as I do from Stewart and Mackintosh, I shall hardly agree with you. My opinion is formed, not at second hand, like those of nine tenths of the people who talk about Bacon, but after several very attentive perusals of his greatest works, and after a good deal of thought. If I am in the wrong, my errors may set the minds of others at work, and may be the means of bringing both them and me to a knowledge of the truth. I never bestowed so much care on anything that I have written. There is not a sentence in the latter half of the article which has not been repeatedly recast. I have no expectation that the popularity of the article will bear any proportion to the trouble which I have expended on it. But the trouble has been so great a pleasure to me that I have already been greatly overpaid. Pray look carefully to the printing.

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[1] It was published in the number for January, 1837.

In little more than a year I shall be embarking for England, and I have determined to employ the four months of my voyage in mastering the German language. I should be much obliged to you to send me out, as early as you can, so that they may be certain to arrive in time, the best grammar, and the best dictionary, that can be procured; a German Bible; Schiller's works; Goethe's works; and Niebuhr's History, both in the original and in the translation. My way of learning a language is always to begin with the Bible, which I can read without a dictionary. After a few days passed in this way, I am master of all the common particles, the common rules of syntax, and a pretty large vocabulary. Then I fall on some good classical work. It was in this way that I learned both Spanish and Portuguese, and I shall try the same course with German.

I have little or nothing to tell you about myself. My life has flown away here with strange rapidity. It seems but yesterday that I left my country; and I am writing to beg you to hasten preparations for my return. I continue to enjoy perfect health, and the little political squalls which I have had to weather here are mere capfuls of wind to a man who has gone through the great hurricanes of English faction.

I shall send another copy of the article on Bacon by another ship. Yours very truly,

T. B. Macaulay.

TO THE SAME

CALCUTTA, November 28th, 1836.

DEAR NAPIER, — There is an oversight in the article on Bacon which I shall be much obliged to you to correct. I have said that Bacon did not deal at all in idle rants "like those in which Cicero and Mr. Shandy sought consolation for the loss of Tullia and of Bobby." Nothing can, as a general remark, be more true, but it escaped my recollection that two or three of Mr. Shandy's consolatory sentences are quoted from Bacon's Essays. The illustration, therefore, is singularly unfortunate. Pray alter it thus: "in which Cicero vainly sought consolation for the loss of Tullia." To be sure, it is idle to correct such trifles at a distance of fifteen thousand miles.

Yours ever, T. B. MACAULAY.

TO THOMAS FLOWER ELLIS

CALCUTTA, March 8th, 1837.

DEAR ELLIS, — I am at present very much worked, and have been so for a long time past. Cameron, after being laid up for some months, sailed at Christmas for the Cape, where I hope his health will be repaired; for this country can very ill spare him. However, we have almost brought our great work to a conclusion. In about a month we shall lay before the Government a complete penal code for a hundred millions of people, with a commentary explaining, and defending, the provisions of the text. Whether it is well or ill done, Heaven knows. I only know that it seems to me to be very ill done when I look at it by itself; and well done when I compare it with Livingstone's Code, with the French Code, or with the English statutes which have been passed for the purpose of consolidating and amending the Criminal Law. In health I am as well as ever I was in my life. Time glides fast. One day is so like another that, but for a habit which I acquired soon after I reached India of pencilling in my books the date of my reading them, I should have hardly any way of estimating the lapse of time. If I want to know when an event took place, I call to mind which of Calderon's plays, or of Plutarch's Lives, I was reading on that day. I turn to the book, find the date, and am generally astonished to see that what seems removed from me by only two or three months really happened nearly a year ago.

I intend to learn German on my voyage home, and I have indented largely (to use our Indian official term) for the requisite books. People tell me that it is a hard language; but I cannot easily believe that there is a language which I cannot master in four months, by working ten hours a day. I promise myself very great delight and information from German literature; and, over and above, I feel a sort of presentiment, a kind of admonition of the Deity, which assures me that the final cause of my existence — the end for which I was sent into this vale of tears — was to make game of certain Germans. The first thing to be done in obedience to this heavenly call is to learn German; and then I may perhaps try, as Milton says, —

> "Frangere Saxonicas Britonum sub Marte phalanges."

Ever yours affectionately, T. B. MACAULAY.

TO MACVEY NAPIER

CALCUTTA, June 15th, 1837.

DEAR NAPIER, — Your letter about my review of Mackintosh miscarried, vexatiously enough. I should have been glad to know what was thought of my performance among friends and foes, for here we have no information on such subjects. The literary correspondents of the Calcutta newspapers seem to be penny-a-line men whose whole stock of literature comes from the conversations in the Green Room.

My long article on Bacon has, no doubt, been in your hands some time. I never, to the best of my recollection, proposed to review Hannah More's Life or Works. If I did, it must have been in jest. She was exactly the very last person in the world about whom I should choose to write a critique. She was a very kind friend to me from childhood. Her notice first called out my literary tastes. Her presents laid the foundation of my library. She was to me what Ninon was to Voltaire — begging her pardon for comparing her to a bad woman, and yours for comparing myself to a great man. She really was a second mother to me. I have a real affection for her memory. I therefore could not possibly write about her unless I wrote in her praise; and all the praise which I could give to her writings, even after straining my conscience in her favor, would be far indeed from satisfying any of her admirers.

I will try my hand on Temple, and on Lord Clive. Shaftesbury I shall let alone. Indeed, his political life is so much connected with Temple's that, without endless repetition, it would be impossible for me to furnish a separate article on each. Temple's Life and Works; the part which he took in the controversy about the ancients and moderns; the Oxford confederacy against Bentley; and the memorable victory which Bentley obtained, will be good subjects. I am in training for this part of the subject, as I have twice read through the Phalaris controversy since I arrived in India.

I have been almost incessantly engaged in public business since I sent off the paper on Bacon; but I expect to have comparative leisure during the short remainder of my stay here. The Penal Code of India is finished, and is in the press. The illness of two of my colleagues threw the work almost entirely on me. It is done, however; and I am not likely to be called upon for vigorous exertion during the rest of my Indian career.

Yours ever, T. B. Macaulay.

If you should have assigned Temple or Clive to anybody else, pray do not be uneasy on that account. The pleasure of writing pays itself.

TO THOMAS FLOWER ELLIS

CALCUTTA, December 18th, 1837.

DEAR ELLIS, — My last letter was on a deeply melancholy subject — the death of our poor friend Malkin. I have felt very much for his widow. The intensity of her affliction, and the fortitude and good feeling which she showed as soon as the first agony was over, have interested me greatly in her. Six or seven of Malkin's most intimate friends here have joined with Ryan and me in subscribing to put up a plain marble tablet in the cathedral, for which I have written an inscription.

My departure is now near at hand. This is the last letter which I shall write to you from India. Our passage is taken in the Lord Hungerford, the most celebrated of the huge floating hotels which run between London and Calcutta. She is more renowned for the comfort and luxury of her internal arrangements than for her speed. As we are to stop at the Cape for a short time, I hardly expect to be with you till the end of May or the beginning of June. I intend to make myself a good German scholar by the time of my arrival in England. I have already, at leisure moments, broken the ice. I have read about half of the New Testament in Luther's translation; and am now getting rapidly, for a beginner, through Schiller's History of the Thirty Years' War. My German library consists of all Goethe's works, all Schiller's works, Müller's History of Switzerland, some of Tieck, some of Lessing, and other works of less fame. I hope to dispatch them all on my way home. I like Schiller's style exceedingly. His history contains a great deal of very just and deep thought, conveyed in language so popular and agreeable that dunces would think him superficial.

I lately took it into my head to obtain some knowledge of the Fathers, and I read therefore a good deal of Athanasius, which by no means raised him in my opinion. I procured the magnificent edition of Chrysostom by Montfaucon from a public library here, and turned over the eleven huge folios, reading wherever the subject was of peculiar interest. As to reading him through, the thing is impossible. These volumes contain matter at least equal to the whole extant literature of the best times of Greece, from Homer to Aristotle inclusive. There are certainly some very brilliant passages in his homilies. It seems curious that, though the Greek literature began to flourish so much earlier than the Latin, it continued to flourish so much later. Indeed, if you except the century which elapsed between Cicero's first public appearance and Livy's death, I am not sure that there was any time at which Greece had not writers equal, or superior, to their Roman contemporaries. I am sure that no Latin writer of the age of Lucian is to be named with Lucian; that no Latin writer of the age of Longinus is to be named with Longinus; that no Latin prose of the age of Chrysostom can be named with Chrysostom's compositions. I have read Augustine's Confessions. The book is not without interest; but he expresses himself in the style of a field-preacher.

Our Penal Code is to be published next week. It has cost me very intense labor; and, whatever its faults may be, it is certainly not a slovenly performance. Whether the work proves useful to India or not, it has been of great use, I feel and know, to my own mind.

Ever yours affectionately, T. B. MACAULAY.

[Macaulay was six months on the voyage home, and meanwhile his father, Zachary Macaulay, died.]

TO MACVEY NAPIER

3 CLARGES STREET, June 26th, 1833.

DEAR NAPIER, — I assure you that I would willingly, and even eagerly, undertake the subject which you propose, if I thought that I should serve you by doing so.

But, depend upon it, you do not know what you are asking for. I have done my best to ascertain what I can and what I cannot do. There are extensive classes of subjects which I think myself able to treat as few people can treat them. After this, you cannot suspect me of any affectation of modesty; and you will therefore believe that I tell you what I sincerely think, when I say that I am not successful in analyzing the effect of works of genius. I have written several things on historical, political, and moral questions, of which, on the fullest reconsideration, I am not ashamed, and by which I should be willing to be estimated; but I have never written a page of criticism on poetry, or the fine arts, which I would not burn if I had the power. Hazlitt used to say of himself, "I am nothing if not critical." The case with me is directly the reverse. I have a strong and acute enjoyment of works of the imagination, but I have never habituated myself to dissect them. Perhaps I enjoy them the more keenly for that very reason. Such books as Lessing's Laocoön,[1] such passages as the criticism on Hamlet in Wilhelm Meister, fill me with wonder and despair. Now, a review of Lockhart's book ought to be a review of Sir Walter's literary performances. I enjoy many of them, — nobody, I believe, more keenly, — but I am sure that there are hundreds who will criticise them far better. Trust to my knowledge of myself. I never in my life was more certain of anything than of what I tell you, and I am sure that Lord Jeffrey will tell you exactly the same.

There are other objections of less weight, but not quite unimportant. Surely it would be desirable that some person who knew Sir Walter, who had at least seen him and spoken with him, should be charged with this article. Many people are living who had a most intimate acquaintance with him. I know no more of him than I know of Dryden or Addison, and not a tenth part so much as I know of Swift, Cowper, or Johnson. Then, again, I have not, from the little that I do know of him, formed so high an opinion of his character as most people seem to entertain, and as it would be expedient for the Edinburgh Review to express. He seems to me to have been most carefully, and successfully, on his guard against the sins which most easily beset literary men. On that side he multiplied his precautions, and set double watch. Hardly any writer of note has been so free from the petty jealousies and morbid irritabilities of our caste. But I do not think that he kept himself equally pure from faults of a very different kind, from the faults of a man of the world. In politics, a bitter and unscrupulous partisan; profuse and ostentatious in expense; agitated by the hopes and fears of a gambler; perpetually sacrificing the perfection of his compositions, and the durability of his fame, to his eagerness for money; writing with the slovenly haste of Dryden, in order to satisfy wants which were not, like those of Dryden, caused by circumstances beyond his control, but which were produced by his extravagant waste or rapacious speculation; this is the way in which he appears to me. I am sorry for it, for I sincerely admire the greater part of his works; but I cannot think him a high-minded man, or a man of very strict principle. Now these are opinions which, however softened, it would be highly unpopular to publish, particularly in a Scotch review.

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[1] "I began Lessing's Laocoön, and read forty or fifty pages: sometimes dissenting, but always admiring and learning." (Macaulay's Journal for September 21st, 1851.)

But why cannot you prevail on Lord Jeffrey to furnish you with this article? No man could do it half so well. He knew and loved Scott; and would perform the critical part of the work, which is much the most important, incomparably. I have said a good deal in the hope of convincing you that it is not without reason that I decline a task which I see that you wish me to undertake.

I am quite unsettled. Breakfasts every morning, dinners every evening, and calls all day, prevent me from making any regular exertion. My books are at the baggage warehouse. My bookcases are in the hands of the cabinet maker. Whatever I write at present I must, as Bacon somewhere says, spin like a spider out of my own entrails, and I have hardly a minute in the week for such spinning. London is in a strange state of excitement. The western streets are in a constant ferment. The influx of foreigners and rustics has been prodigious, and the regular inhabitants are almost as idle and curious as the sojourners. Crowds assemble perpetually, nobody knows why, with a sort of vague expectation that there will be something to see; and after staring at each other disperse without seeing anything. This will last till the Coronation is over. The only quiet haunts are the streets of the City. For my part, I am sick to death of the turmoil and almost wish myself at Calcutta again, or becalmed on the equator. Ever yours most truly,

T. B. MACAULAY.

TO THE SAME

3 CLARGES STREET, LONDON, July 20th, 1838.

DEAR NAPIER, — As to Brougham, I understand and feel for your embarrassments. I may perhaps refine too much; but I should say that this strange man, finding himself almost alone in the world, absolutely unconnected with either Whigs or Conservatives, and not having a single vote in either House of Parliament at his command except his own, is desirous to make the Review his organ. With this intention, unless I am greatly deceived, after having during several years contributed little or nothing of value, he has determined to exert himself as if he were a young writer struggling into note, and to make himself important to the work by his literary services. And he certainly has succeeded. His late articles, particularly the long one in the April number, have very high merit. They are, indeed, models of magazine writing as distinguished from other sorts of writing. They are not, I think, made for duration. Everything about them is exaggerated, incorrect, sketchy. All the characters are either too black or too fair. The passions of the writer do not suffer him even to maintain the decent appearance of impartiality. And the style, though striking and animated, will not bear examination through a single paragraph. But the effect of the first perusal is great; and few people read an article in a review twice. A bold, dashing, scene-painting manner is that which always succeeds best in periodical writing; and I have no doubt that these lively and vigorous papers of Lord Brougham will be of more use to you than more highly finished compositions. His wish, I imagine, is to establish in this way such an ascendency as may enable him to drag the Review along with him to any party to which his furious passions may lead him; to the Radicals; to the Tories; to any set of men by whose help he may be able to revenge himself on old friends, whose only crime is that they could not help finding him to be an habitual and incurable traitor. Hitherto your caution and firmness have done wonders. Yet already he has begun to use the word "Whig" as an epithet of reproach, exactly as it is used in the lowest writings of the Tories, and of the extreme Radicals; exactly as it is used in Blackwood, in Fraser, in The Age, in Tait's Magazine. There are several instances in the article on Lady Charlotte Bury. "The Whig notions of female propriety." "The Whig secret tribunal." I have no doubt that the tone of his papers will become more and more hostile to the Government; and that, in a short time, it will be necessary for you to take one of three courses, to every one of which there are strong objections — to break with him; to admit his papers into the Review, while the rest of the Review continues to be written in quite a different tone; or to yield to his dictation, and to let him make the Review a mere tool of his ambition and revenge.

As to Brougham's feelings toward myself, I know, and have known for a long time, that he hates me. If during the last ten years I have gained any reputation either in politics or in letters — if I have had any success in life — it has been without his help or countenance, and often in spite of his utmost exertions to keep me down. It is strange that he should be surprised at my not calling on him since my return. I did not call on him when I went away. When he was chancellor, and I was in office, I never once attended his levée. It would be strange indeed if now, when he is squandering the remains of his public character in an attempt to ruin the party of which he was a member then, and of which I am a member still, I should begin to pay court to him. For the sake of the long intimacy which subsisted between him and my father, and of the mutual good offices which passed between them, I will not, unless I am compelled, make any public attack on him. But this is really the only tie which restrains me; for I neither love him nor fear him.

With regard to the Indian Penal Code, if you are satisfied that Empson really wishes to review it on its own account, and not merely out of kindness to me, I should not at all object to his doing so. The subject is one of immense importance. The work is of a kind too abstruse for common readers, and can be made known to them only through the medium of some popular exposition. There is another consideration which weighs much with me. The Press in India has fallen into the hands of the lower legal practitioners, who detest all law reform; and their scurrility, though mere matter of derision to a person accustomed to the virulence of English factions, is more formidable than you can well conceive to the members of the civil service, who are quite unaccustomed to be dragged rudely before the public. It is, therefore, highly important that the members of the Indian Legislature, and of the Law Commission, should be supported against the clamorous abuse of the scribblers who surround them by seeing that their performances attract notice at home, and are judged with candor and discernment by writers of a far higher rank in literature than the Calcutta editors. For these reasons I should be glad to see an article on the Penal Code in the Edinburgh Review. But I must stipulate that my name may not be mentioned, and that everything may be attributed to the Law Commission as a body. I am quite confident that Empson's own good taste, and regard for me, will lead him, if he should review the Code, to abstain most carefully from everything that resembles puffing. His regard to truth and the public interest will, of course, lead him to combat our opinions freely wherever he thinks us wrong.

There is little chance that I shall see Scotland this year. In the autumn I shall probably set out for Rome, and return to London in the spring. As soon as I return, I shall seriously commence my History. The first part (which, I think, will take up five octavo volumes) will extend from the Revolution to the commencement of Sir Robert Walpole's long administration; a period of three or four and thirty very eventful years. From the commencement of Walpole's administration to the commencement of the American war, events may be dispatched more concisely. From the commencement of the American war it will again become necessary to be copious. These, at least, are my present notions. How far I shall bring the narrative down I have not determined. The death of George the Fourth would be the best halting-place. The History would then be an entire view of all the transactions which took place, between the Revolution which brought the Crown into harmony with the Parliament, and the Revolution which brought the Parliament into harmony with the nation. But there are great and obvious objections to contemporary history. To be sure, if I live to be seventy, the events of George the

Fourth's reign will be to me then what the American war and the Coalition are to me now.

Whether I shall continue to reside in London seems to me very uncertain. I used to think that I liked London; but, in truth, I liked things which were in London, and which are gone. My family is scattered. I have no parliamentary or official business to bind me to the capital. The business to which I propose to devote myself is almost incompatible with the distractions of a town life. I am sick of the monotonous succession of parties, and long for quiet and retirement. To quit politics for letters is, I believe, a wise choice. To cease to be a member of Parliament only to become a diner-out would be contemptible; and it is not easy for me to avoid becoming a mere diner-out if I reside here.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THOMAS FLOWER ELLIS

London, September 15th, 1838.

Dear Ellis, — On Monday I shall set off for Liverpool by the railroad, which will then be opened for the whole way. I shall remain there about a week. The chief object of my visit is to see my little nephew, the son of my sister Margaret. It is no visit of pleasure, though I hear everything most hopeful and pleasing about the boy's talents and temper.[1] Indeed, it is not without a great effort that I force myself to go. But I will say no more on this subject, for I cannot command myself when I approach it.

Empson came to London yesterday night, with his lady in high beauty and good humor. It is, you know, quite a proverbial truth that wives never tolerate an intimacy between their husbands and any old friends, except in two cases: the one, when the old friend was, before the marriage, a friend of both wife and husband; the other, when the friendship is of later date than the marriage. I may hope to keep Empson's friendship under the former exception, as I have kept yours under the latter.

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[1] The boy died in 1847, having already shown as fair promise of remarkable ability and fine character as can be given at the age of thirteen. "I feel the calamity much," Macaulay wrote. "I had left the dear boy my library, little expecting that I should ever wear mourning for him."

Empson brings a sad account of poor Napier: all sorts of disquiet and trouble, with dreadful, wearing complaints which give his friends the gravest cause for alarm. And, as if this were not enough, Brougham is persecuting him with the utmost malignity. I did not think it possible for human nature, in an educated, civilized man — a man, too, of great intellect — to have become so depraved. He writes to Napier in language of the most savage hatred, and of the most extravagant vaunting. The ministers, he says, have felt only his little finger. He will now put forth his red right hand. They shall have no rest. As to me, he says that I shall rue my baseness in not calling on him. But it is against Empson that he is most furious. He says that, in consequence of this new marriage,[1] he will make it the chief object of his life to prevent Jeffrey from ever being Lord President of the Court of Session. He thinks that there is some notion of making Empson editor of the Review. If that be done, he says, he will relinquish every other object in order to ruin the Review. He will lay out his last sixpence in that enterprise. He will make revenge on Empson the one business of the remaining years of his life. Empson says that nothing so demoniacal was ever written in the world. For my part, since he takes it into his head to be angry, I am pleased that he goes on in such a way; for he is much less formidable in such a state than he would be if he kept his temper. I sent to Napier on Thursday a long article on Temple. It is superficial; but on that account, among others, I shall be surprised if it does not take.

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[1] Mr. Empson had married the daughter of Lord Jeffrey.

Hayter has painted me for his picture of the House of Commons. I cannot judge of his performance. I can only say, as Charles the Second did on a similar occasion, "Odds fish! if I am like this, I am an ugly fellow."

Yours ever, T. B. M.

TO MACVEY NAPIER

London, October 8th, 1838.

Dear Napier, — I have just received your letter, which has performed a circuit by Liverpool. I am truly concerned to have so indifferent an account of your health; and it is my earnest wish to spare you at present, as far as possible, all vexation and anxiety. I should gladly furnish an article on politics, but for one very sufficient reason; and that is, that I am not yet sufficiently well informed respecting late events to write on them at a distance from books, files of newspapers, and men capable of giving me information. I was on the sea from January to June. I arrived in England profoundly ignorant of all that had passed since August, 1837. In the crowd and bustle of the late London season, I could hardly find leisure to study anything at all. It was not till I had sent you my paper about Temple that I sat down to gather information as to the history of the year which preceded my return. My sofa is at this moment covered with enormous piles of old newspapers, in which I have been reading the events of the Canadian insurrection. As an instance of the extent of my ignorance, I may mention that, till within the last few days, I had never heard of the reprimand given to O'Connell by the Speaker, in conformity with the orders of the House, one of the most remarkable and exciting events of the late session. You will at once perceive that it is quite impossible for me, under these circumstances, to venture on discussing the present state of politics. When I have made myself master of them, I shall be glad to render any assistance in my power to the Ministry. In the meantime, I wish you would try whether Sir George Grey can do anything of that sort for you. You can easily get at him through Stephen. This minds me that Stephen is a good deal hurt, though not with you, by the insertion of an apology for what he said about Clarkson. To you personally, he has none but the kindest feelings; but he is very angry with Brougham. I am sure that the matter will be easily accommodated, and I have taken on myself to assure him that you will do him every justice.

I think of writing an article on Panizzi's edition of Boiardo, with some remarks on the romantic poetry of the Italians generally. This I can do as well, indeed better, on my journey than in London. I will try to send it off by the middle of December, or earlier. If I find that I cannot manage it, I will give you timely notice. When I come back, I will fall on Lord Clive. I think I can promise a tolerable paper on that subject.

I set off on Friday.[1] I cannot at present tell you with certainty what my route will be. I earnestly hope that I shall find you on my return quite able to stand any degree of bothering from Brougham or anybody else. His last article is excellent, better, I think, than its predecessor; but I am not sure that it is likely to produce quite so great an effect. The Number seems to be generally approved, as far as I can judge in the present empty state of London. Ever yours,

T. B. MACAULAY.

TO THE SAME

FLORENCE, November 4th, 1838.

DEAR NAPIER, — I arrived here the day before yesterday in very good health, after a journey of three weeks from London. I find that it will be absolutely impossible for me to execute the plan of reviewing Panizzi's edition of Boiardo in time for your next number. I have not been able to read one half of Boiardo's poem, and, in order to do what I propose, I must read Berni's *rifacimento* too, as well as Pulci's Morgante; and this, I fear, will be quite out of the question. The day is not long enough for what I want to do in it: and if I find this to be the case at Florence, I may be sure that at Rome I shall have still less leisure. However, it is my full intention to be in England in February, and on the day on which I reach London I will begin to work for you on Lord Clive.

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[1] [For a journey on the Continent.]

I know little English news. I steal a quarter of an hour in the day from marbles and altar-pieces to read the Times and the Morning Chronicle. Lord Brougham, I have a notion, will often wish that he had left Lord Durham alone. Lord Durham will be in the House of Lords, with his pugnacious spirit, and with his high reputation among the Radicals. In oratorical abilities there is, of course, no comparison between the men; but Lord Durham has quite talents enough to expose Lord Brougham, and has quite as much acrimony and a great deal more nerve than Lord Brougham himself. I should very much like to know what the general opinion about this matter is. My own suspicion is that the Tories in the House of Lords will lose reputation, though I do not imagine that the Government will gain any. As to Brougham, he has reached that happy point at which it is equally impossible for him to gain character and lose it.

Ever, dear Napier, yours most truly,

T. B. MACAULAY.

TO THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE

ROME, December 19th, 1838.

DEAR LORD LANSDOWNE, — I have received your kind letter, and thank you for it. I have now had ample time to reflect on the determination which I expressed to Lord Melbourne and Rice; and I am every day more and more satisfied that the course which I have taken is the best for myself, and the best also for the Government.

If I thought it right to follow altogether my own inclinations, I should entirely avoid public life. But I feel that these are not times for flinching from the Whig banner. I feel that at this juncture no friend of toleration and of temperate liberty is justified in withholding his support from the ministers; and I think that, in the present unprecedented and inexplicable scarcity of parliamentary talent among the young men of England, a little of that talent may be of as much service as far greater powers in times more fertile of eloquence. I would, therefore, make some sacrifice of ease, leisure, and money, in order to serve the Government in the House of Commons. But I do not think that public duty at all requires me to overcome the dislike which I feel for official life. On the contrary, my duty and inclination are here on one side. For I am certain that, as an independent member of Parliament, I should have far more weight than as judge-advocate. It is impossible for me to be ignorant of my position in the world, and of the misconstructions to which it exposes me. Entering Parliament as judge-advocate, I should be considered as a mere political adventurer. My speeches might be complimented as creditable rhetorical performances, but they would never produce the sort of effect which I have seen produced by very rude sentences stammered by such men as Lord Spencer and Lord Ebrington. If I enter Parliament as a placeman, nobody will believe, what nevertheless is the truth, that I am quite as independent, quite as indifferent to salary, as the Duke of Northumberland can be. As I have none of that authority which belongs to large fortune and high rank, it is absolutely necessary to my comfort, and will be greatly conducive to my usefulness, that I should have the authority which belongs to proved disinterestedness. I should also, as a member of Parliament not in office, have leisure for other pursuits, which I cannot bear to think of quitting, and which you kindly say you do not wish me to quit. A life of literary repose would be most to my own taste. Of my literary repose I am, however, willing to sacrifice exactly as much as public duty requires me to sacrifice; but I will sacrifice no more; and by going into Parliament without office I both make a smaller personal sacrifice, and do more service to the public, than by taking office. I hope that you will think these reasons satisfactory; for you well know that, next to my own approbation, it would be my first wish to have yours.

I have been more delighted than I can express by Italy, and above all by Rome. I had no notion that an excitement so powerful and so agreeable, still untried by me, was to be found in the world. I quite agree with you in thinking that the first impression is the weakest; and that time, familiarity, and reflection, which destroy the charm of so many objects, heighten the attractions of this wonderful place. I hardly know whether I am more interested by the old Rome or by the new Rome — by the monuments of the extraordinary empire which has perished, or by the institutions of the still more extraordinary empire which, after all the shocks which it has sustained, is still full of life and of perverted energy. If there were not a single ruin, fine building, picture, or statue in Rome, I should think myself repaid for my journey by having seen the headquarters of Catholicism, and learned something of the nature and effect of the strange Brahmanical government established in the Ecclesiastical State. Have you read Von Ranke's History of the Papacy since the Reformation? I have owed much of my pleasure here to what I learned from him.

Rome is full of English. We could furnish exceedingly respectable Houses of Lords and Commons. There are at present twice as many coroneted carriages in the Piazza di Spagna as in St. James's parish.

Ever, my dear lord, yours most faithfully,

T. B. Macaulay.

TO MACVEY NAPIER

LONDON, November 13th, 1840.

DEAR NAPIER, — Yesterday evening I received Gladstone's book, and read it. I do not think that it would be wise to review it. I observed in it very little that had any reference to politics, and very little indeed that might not be consistently said by a supporter of the Voluntary system. It is, in truth, a theological treatise; and I have no mind to engage in a controversy about the nature of the sacraments, the operation of holy orders, the visibility of the Church, and such points of learning; except when they are connected, as in his former work they were connected, with questions of government. I have no disposition to split hairs about the spiritual reception of the body and blood of Christ in the eucharist, or about baptismal regeneration. I shall try to give you a paper on a very different subject — Wycherley, and the other good-for-nothing fellows whose indecorus wit Leigh Hunt has edited.

I see that a life of Warren Hastings is just coming out. I mark it for mine. I will try to make as interesting an article, though I fear not so flashy, as that on Clive.

The state of things at Edinburgh[1] has greatly vexed me. Craig advises me not to go down, at least for some time. But, if I do not go soon, I shall not be able to go at all this year. What do you think about the matter?

Ever yours, T. B. MACAULAY.

TO THE SAME

LONDON, January 11th, 1841.

DEAR NAPIER, —As to my paper on the dramatists, if you are content, so am I. I set less value on it than on anything I have written since I was a boy.

I have hardly opened Gleig's book on Warren Hastings, and I cannot yet judge whether I can review it before it is complete. I am not quite sure that so vast a subject may not bear two articles. The scene of the first would lie principally in India. The Rohilla War, the disputes of Hastings and his Council, the character of Francis, the death of Nuncomar, the rise of the empire of Hyder, the seizure of Benares, and many other interesting matters, would furnish out such a paper. In the second, the scene would be changed to Westminster. There we should have the Coalition; the India Bill; the impeachment; the characters of all the noted men of that time, from Burke, who managed the prosecution of Hastings, down to the wretched Tony Pasquin, who first defended and then libelled him. I hardly know a story so interesting, and of such various interest. And the central figure is in the highest degree striking and majestic. I think Hastings, though far from faultless, one of the greatest men that England ever produced. He had preëminent talents for government, and great literary talents too; a fine taste, a princely spirit, and heroic equanimity in the midst of adversity and danger. He was a man for whom nature had done much of what the Stoic philosophy pretended, and only pretended, to do for its disciples. "Mens æqua in arduis" is the inscription under his picture in the Government House at Calcutta, and never was there a more appropriate motto. This story has never been told as well as it deserves. Mill's account of Hastings' administration is indeed very able — the ablest part, in my judgment, of his work — but it is dry. As to Gleig, unless he has greatly improved since he wrote Sir Thomas Munro's life, he will make very little of his subject. I am not so vain as to think that I can do it full justice; but the success of my paper on Clive has emboldened me, and I have the advantage of being in hourly intercourse with Trevelyan, who is thoroughly well acquainted with the languages, manners, and diplomacy of the Indian courts. Ever yours, T. B. MACAULAY.

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[1] [Macaulay was a candidate for Edinburgh and was twice elected. He became also a cabinet minister.]

TO THOMAS FLOWER ELLIS

LONDON, July 12th, 1841.

DEAR ELLIS, — I cannot send you Virginius, for I have not a copy by me at present, and have not time to make one. When you return I hope to have finished another ballad, on the Lake Regillus. I have no doubt that the author of the original ballad had Homer in his eye. The battle of the Lake Regillus is a purely Homeric battle. I am confident that the ballad-maker has heard of the fight over the body of Patroclus. We will talk more about this. I may, perhaps, publish a small volume next spring. I am encouraged by the approbation of all who have seen the little pieces. I find the unlearned quite as well satisfied as the learned.

I have taken a very comfortable suite of chambers in The Albany; and I hope to lead during some years a sort of life peculiarly suited to my taste — college life at the West End of London.[1] I have an entrance hall, two sitting-rooms, a bedroom, a kitchen, cellars, and two rooms for servants — all for ninety guineas a year; and this in a situation which no younger son of a duke need be ashamed to put on his card. We shall have, I hope, some very pleasant breakfasts there, to say nothing of dinners. My own housekeeper will do very well for a few plain dishes, and The Clarendon is within a hundred yards.

I own that I am quite delighted with our prospects. A strong opposition is the very thing that I wanted. I shall be heartily glad if it lasts till I can finish a History of England, from the Revolution to the Accession of the House of Hanover. Then I shall be willing to go in again for a few years. It seems clear that we shall be just about three hundred. This is what I have always supposed. I got through very triumphantly at Edinburgh, and very cheap. I believe I can say what no other man in the kingdom can say. I have been four times returned to Parliament by cities of more than a hundred and forty thousand inhabitants; and all those four elections together have not cost me five hundred pounds.

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[1] [By a change of government, Macaulay had been thrown out of public life and now devoted himself wholly to literature, especially to his History.]

Your ballads are delightful. I like that of Ips, Gips, and Johnson best. Napoleon is excellent, but hardly equal to the "Donkey wot would n't go."

Ever yours, T. B. Macaulay.

TO MACVEY NAPIER

Albany, London, December 1st, 1841.

Dear Napier, — You do not seem to like what I suggested about Henry the Fifth.[1] Nor do I, on full consideration. What do you say to an article on Frederic the Great? Tom Campbell is bringing out a book about his Majesty.

Now that I am seriously engaged in an extensive work, which will probably be the chief employment of the years of health and vigor which remain to me, it is necessary that I should choose my subjects for reviews with some reference to that work. I should not choose to write an article on some point which I should have to treat again as a historian; for, if I did, I should be in danger of repeating myself. I assure you that I a little grudge you Westminster Hall, in the paper on Hastings. On the other hand, there are many characters and events which will occupy little or no space in my History, yet with which, in the course of my historical researches, I shall necessarily become familiar. There cannot be a better instance than Frederic the Great. His personal character, manners, studies, literary associates; his quarrel with Voltaire, his friendship for Maupertuis, and his own unhappy *métromanie* will be very slightly, if at all, alluded to in a History of England.[1] Yet in order to write the History of England, it will be necessary to turn over all the memoirs, and all the writings, of Frederic, connected with us, as he was, in a most important war. In this way my reviews would benefit by my historical researches, and yet would not forestall my History, or materially impede its progress. I should not like to engage in any researches altogether alien from what is now my main object. Still less should I like to tell the same story over and over again, which I must do if I were to write on such a subject as the Vernon Correspondence, or Trevor's History of William the Third. Ever yours, T. B. MACAULAY.

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[1] Macaulay had written on the 10th of November: "If Longman will send me Mr. Tyler's book on Henry the Fifth, I will see whether I cannot, with the help of Froissart and Monstrelet, furnish a spirited sketch of that short and most brilliant life."

TO HENRY TAYLOR

ALBANY, June 20th, 1842.

DEAR TAYLOR, — Many thanks for the little volume. I have read it once. But one reading is not sufficient to entitle me to pronounce a judgment. However, I cannot delay sending you my acknowledgments and communicating my first impressions. I think that, considered as an intellectual effort, the tragedy is fully equal to Van Artevelde. Indeed, I think that it contains finer specimens of diction. It moves the feelings less, or at least it moves my feelings. But this I attribute to a cause which was perhaps beyond your control. Van Artevelde and his Italian mistress are persons of far higher powers and stronger characters than Edwy and his Queen. And the cracking of tough natures is the most affecting thing that a dramatist can exhibit. Othello is the great example. Poor Edwy and his bride go down like the willows before the hurricane.

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[1] At this period of his career Macaulay still purposed, and hoped, to write the history of England "down to a time which is within the memory of men still living."

I should say that you have succeeded on the whole better in exhibiting the character of the age and of the two parties than the character of individuals. In this respect the play reminds me of Shakespeare's Henry the Sixth, which, though not eminent, at least, among his works for delineation of particular men and women, exhibits a peculiar state of society with a vivacity and truth such as no historian has approached.

Your monastic and secular factions are admirable. Dunstan I cannot make up my mind about. I must wait for another reading. I am more and more struck by what I think I once mentioned to you, the resemblance between your poetry and Schiller's. I wish to God you would take that great subject of which he touches only a portion, the greatest subject of modern times, Mary, Queen of Scots, and give her life and death in three parts. The first part should end with the death of Darnley, and the second with the flight into England.

Ever yours truly, T. B. MACAULAY.

TO MACVEY NAPIER

ALBANY, LONDON, June 24th, 1842.

DEAR NAPIER, — I have thought a good deal about republishing my articles, and have made up my mind not to do so. It is rather provoking, to be sure, to learn that a third edition is coming out in America, and to meet constantly with smuggled copies. It is still more provoking to see trash, of which I am perfectly guiltless, inserted among my writings. But, on the whole, I think it best that things should remain as they are. The public judges, and ought to judge, indulgently of periodical works. They are not expected to be highly finished. Their natural life is only six weeks. Sometimes their writer is at a distance from the books to which he wants to refer. Sometimes he is forced to hurry through his task in order to catch the post. He may blunder; he may contradict himself; he may break off in the middle of a story; he may give an immoderate extension to one part of his subject, and dismiss an equally important part in a few words. All this is readily forgiven if there be a certain spirit and vivacity in his style. But, as soon as he republishes, he challenges a comparison with all the most symmetrical and polished of human compositions. A painter who has a picture in the exhibition of the Royal Academy would act very unwisely if he took it down and carried it over to the National Gallery. Where it now hangs, surrounded by a crowd of daubs which are only once seen and then forgotten, it may pass for a fine piece. He is a fool if he places it side by side with the masterpieces of Titian and Claude. My reviews are generally thought to be better written, and they certainly live longer, than the reviews of most other people ; and this ought to content me. The moment I come forward to demand a higher rank, I must expect to be judged by a higher standard. Fonblanque may serve for a beacon. His leading articles in the Examiner were extolled to the skies, while they were considered merely as leading articles ; for they were in style and manner incomparably superior to anything in the Courier, or Globe, or Standard ; nay, to anything in the Times. People said that it was a pity that such admirable compositions should perish ; so Fonblanque determined to republish them in a book. He never considered that in that form they would be compared not with the rant and twaddle of the daily and weekly press, but with Burke's pamphlets, with Pascal's letters, with Addison's Spectators and Freeholders. They would not stand this new test a moment. I shall profit by the warning. What the Yankees may do I cannot help ; but I will not found my pretensions to the rank of a classic on my reviews. I will remain, according to the excellent precept in the Gospel, at the lower end of the table, where I am constantly accosted with "Friend, go up higher," and not push my way to the top at the risk of being compelled with shame to take the lowest room. If I live twelve or fifteen years, I may perhaps produce something which I may not be afraid to exhibit side by side with the performance of the old masters.

Ever yours truly, T. B. MACAULAY.

TO THOMAS FLOWER ELLIS

ALBANY, LONDON, August 22d, 1842.

DEAR ELLIS, — For the ballads many thanks. Some of them are capital.

I have been wishing for your advice. My little volume is nearly finished, and I must talk the prefaces over with you fully. I have made some alterations which I think improvements, and, in particular, have shortened the Battle of Regillus by near thirty lines without, I think, omitting any important circumstance.

It is odd that we never, in talking over this subject, remembered that in all probability the old Roman lays were in the Saturnian metre; and it is still more odd that my ballads should, by mere accident, be very like the Saturnian metre; quite as like, indeed, as suits the genius of our language. The Saturnian metre is acatalectic dimeter iambic, followed by three trochees. A pure Saturnian line is preserved by some grammarian: —

> "Dabunt malum Metelli Nævio poetæ."

Now, oddly enough, every tetrastich, and almost every distich, of my ballads opens with an acatalectic dimeter iambic line.

> "Lars Porsena of Clusium"

is precisely the same with

> "Dabunt malum Metelli."

I have not kept the trochees, which really would be very unpleasing to an English ear. Yet there are some verses which the omission of a single syllable would convert into pure Saturnian metre; as,

> In Alba's lake no fisher
> (His) nets to-day is flinging.

Is not this an odd coincidence?

The only pure Saturnian line that I have been able to call to mind in all English poetry is in the nursery song: —

"The queen was in her parlor
Eating bread and honey."

Let me know when you come to town. I shall be here. Fix a day for dining with me next week — the sooner after your arrival, the better. I must give you one good boring about these verses before I deliver them over to the printer's devils.

Have you read Lord Londonderry's Travels? I hear that they contain the following pious expressions of resignation to the divine will: "Here I learned that Almighty God, for reasons best known to himself, had been pleased to burn down my house in the county of Durham." Is not the mixture of vexation with respect admirable?

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO MACVEY NAPIER

ALBANY, January 31st, 1844.

DEAR NAPIER, — I send by this day's post two packets containing my article on Barère. I shall have many corrections, I suspect, to make in the proofs. You will, I hope, be able to let me have a revise. As to the expediency of publishing an extra Number, I have my doubts, which I merely submit to your judgment. My own impression is that a periodical work of the bulk of the Edinburgh Review must necessarily, under the very ablest management, contain a large proportion of matter which does not rise above mediocrity. I call a number either of the Edinburgh Review or of the Quarterly Review a very good one, if half of it be good, and the rest tolerable. I am content if one third of it be good. I do not think, I confess, that our valuable matter will bear to be more diluted than at present. I would infinitely rather bring out in a year four good Numbers than five middling Numbers: and I confess that I am afraid that we shall scarcely be able to furnish even middling Numbers, if there are to be five. I admit that there may be a paper of such pressing importance as may make it proper to anticipate the ordinary period of publication. But I imagine that such papers are very rare. As to literary and historical articles, they may wait any length of time. The review which I send you to-day will be just as seasonable in 1845 as at the present moment. And even as to political articles, such articles are seldom of such a sort that they are likely to affect any particular division in Parliament. I own that I recollect scarcely one which might not as well have been published in April as in January, or in July as in April. As to the Scinde question, I am certain that no paper on that subject, however well executed, can be a sufficient ground for publishing an extra Number. Longman of course looks at this matter merely in a commercial view. Yet, after all, the commercial point of view, if it be well chosen, coincides with the literary and political point of view. For whatever raises the character of a journal, and increases its power over public opinion, must in the long run be beneficial to the proprietors. However, of all this you are a better judge than I. I merely tell you quite frankly what occurs to me.

Is Stephen doing nothing? His papers were generally very much liked, so much that they have been reprinted in America. The last time I saw him, I asked if he was writing for you. He said no. I asked why? He said that you did not seem to want anything from him at present, and that you had a superabundance of matter. I made no answer, but I determined to tell you this; for the Review seldom contains matter that ought to exclude his articles. Ever yours,

T. B. MACAULAY.

TO HANNAH MACAULAY TREVELYAN

ROTTERDAM, October 9th, 1844.

DEAR HANNAH, — After a very pleasant day at Antwerp, I started at seven yesterday morning by the steamer for Rotterdam. I had an odd conversation on board, and one which, I think, will amuse both you and Trevelyan. As we passed Dordrecht, one of the passengers, an Englishman, said that he had never seen anything like it. Parts of it reminded me of some parts of Cape Town, and I said so. An elderly gentleman immediately laid hold of me. "You have been at the Cape, sir?" "Yes, sir." "Perhaps you have been in India?" "Yes, sir." "My dear, here is a gentleman who has been in India." So I became an object of attention to an ill-looking, vulgar woman, who appeared to be the wife of my questioner; and to his daughter, a pretty girl enough, but by no means ladylike. "And how did you like India? Is it not the most delightful place in the world?" "It is well enough," I said, "for a place of exile." "Exile!" says the lady. "I think people are exiled when they come away from India." "I have never," said the old gentleman, "had a day's good health since I left India." A little chat followed about mangoes and mango-fish, punkas and palanquins, white ants and cockroaches. I maintained, as I generally do on such occasions, that all the fruits of the tropics are not worth a pottle of Covent Garden strawberries, and that a lodging up three pairs of stairs in London is better than a palace in a compound at Chowringhee. My gentleman was vehement in asserting that India was the only country to live in. "I went there," he said, "at sixteen, in 1800, and stayed till 1830, when I was superannuated. If the Company had not chosen to superannuate me, I should have been there still. I should like to end my days there." I could not conceive what he meant by being superannuated at a time when he could have been only forty-six years old, and consequently younger than most of the field-officers in the Indian army, and than half the senior merchants in the Civil Service; but I was too polite to interrogate him.

That was a politeness, however, of which he had no notion. "How long," he asked, "were you in India?" "Between four and five years." "A clergyman, I suppose?" Whether he drew this inference from the sanctity of my looks, or from my olive-colored coat and shawl waistcoat, I do not pretend to guess; but I answered that I had not the honor to belong to so sacred a profession. "A mercantile gentleman, no doubt?" "No." Then his curiosity got the better of all the laws of good-breeding, and he went straight to the point. "May I ask, sir, to whom I have the honor of talking?" I told him. "Oh, sir," said he, "you must often have heard of me. I am Mr. ——. I was long at Lucknow." "Heard of you!" thought I. "Yes; and a pretty account I have heard of you!" I should have at once turned on my heel and walked away, if his daughter had not been close to us; and, scoundrel as he is, I could not affront him in her presence. I merely said, with the coldest tone and look, "Certainly I have heard of Mr. ——." He went on, "You are related, I think, to a Civil servant who made a stir about Sir Edward Colebrooke." It was just on my lips to say, "Yes. It was by my brother-in-law's means that Sir Edward was *superannuated;*" but I commanded myself, and merely said that I was nearly related to Mr. Trevelyan; and I then called to the steward, and pretended to be very anxious to settle with him about some coffee that I had taken. While he was changing me a gold William, I got away from the old villain, went to the other end of the poop, took out my book, and avoided looking toward him during the rest of the passage. And yet I could not help thinking a little better of him for what had happened, for it reminded me of what poor Macnaghten once said to me at Ootacamund: "—— has certain excuses which Colebrooke and others have not had; for he is really so great a fool that he can hardly be called a responsible agent." I certainly never knew such an instance of folly as that to which I had just been witness. Had he been a man of common sense, he would have avoided all allusion to India; or, at any rate, would have talked about India only to people who were likely to be unacquainted with his history. He must have known that I was Secretary to the Board of Control when that Board expressed its entire concurrence in the measures taken by the Company against him.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

ALBANY, December 19th, 1845.

DEAR HANNAH, — It is an odd thing to see a ministry making. I never witnessed the process before. Lord John has been all day in his inner library. His antechamber has been filled with comers and goers, some talking in knots, some writing notes at tables. Every five minutes somebody is called into the inner room. As the people who have been closeted come out, the cry of the whole body of expectants is, "What are you?" I was summoned almost as soon as I arrived, and found Lord Auckland and Lord Clarendon sitting with Lord John. After some talk about other matters, Lord John told me that he had been trying to ascertain my wishes, and that he found that I wanted leisure and quiet more than salary and business. Labouchere had told him this. He therefore offered me the Pay Office, one of the three places which, as I have often told you, I should prefer. I at once accepted it. The tenure by which I shall hold it is so precarious that it matters little what its advantages may be; but I shall have two thousand a year for the trouble of signing my name. I must indeed attend Parliament more closely than I have of late done; but my mornings will be as much my own as if I were out of office. If I give to my History the time which I used to pass in transacting business when I was Secretary at War, I shall get on nearly as fast as when I was in opposition. Some other arrangements promise to be less satisfactory. Palmerston will hear of nothing but the Foreign Office, and Lord Grey therefore declines taking any place. I hope that Lord John will give one of the secretaryships of state to George Grey. It would be a great elevation; but I am sure that it is the right thing to do. I have told Grey that I look to him as our future leader in the Commons, and that no pretensions of mine shall ever interfere with this. Labouchere feels exactly as I do. Labouchere and Baring are at least as good men of business as Grey; and I may say without vanity that I have made speeches which were out of the reach of any of the three. But, taking the talent for business and the talent for speaking together, Grey is undoubtedly the best qualified among us for the lead; and we are perfectly sensible of this. Indeed, I may say that I do not believe that there was ever a set of public men who had less jealousy of each other, or who formed a more correct estimate of themselves, than the younger members of this Cabinet. Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO THE SAME

ALBANY, LONDON, December 20th, 1845.

DEAR HANNAH, — All is over. Late at night, just as I was undressing, a knock was given at the door of my chambers. A messenger had come from Lord John with a short note. The quarrel between Lord Grey and Lord Palmerston had made it impossible to form a ministry. I went to bed and slept sound. In the morning I went to the corner of Belgrave Square, which is now the great place for political news, and found that Lord John had gone to Windsor to resign his trust into the Queen's hands.

I have no disposition to complain of the loss of office. On the contrary, my escape from the slavery of a placeman is my only consolation.[1] But I feel that we are in an ignominious position as a party. After agreeing on the principles of our measure, after agreeing that our public duty required us to take office, we have now thrown the game up, not on account of any new matter affecting the national interests, but solely because we are, as the French say, *mauvais coucheurs*, and cannot adjust ourselves to accommodate each other. I do not blame Lord John; but Lord Grey and Lord Palmerston are both at fault. I think Lord Grey, highly as I esteem his integrity and ability, chiefly responsible for the unfortunate situation in which we are now placed; but I suspect that Palmerston will be made the scapegoat. He is no favorite with the public. A large portion of our own friends think him a dangerous minister. By the whole Continental and American press he has been represented as the very Genius of War and Discord. People will now say that, when every other place was within his reach; when he might have had the Home Office, the Colonies, the Admiralty, a peerage — in short, his own terms — he declared that unless he was allowed to be where he was generally considered as a firebrand, he would blow up his party, at a crisis when the fate of his party involved the fate of his country. I suspect that a great storm of public indignation will burst upon him, and that he will sink under it. In the meantime, what is to happen?

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[1] "On the whole," Macaulay wrote to Mr. Ellis, "I am inclined to think that what has happened will do more good than harm. Perhaps the pleasure with which I have this morning looked round my chambers and

I have had an anxious time since you were away; but I can truly say that I have done nothing through all these troubles which I should be ashamed to hear proclaimed at Charing Cross, or which I would not do again.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

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resumed my History has something to do in making me thus cheerful. Let me advise you to put forth a little tract, after the fashion of the seventeenth century, entitled A Secret History of some Late Passages, as they were communicated by a Person of Honor to T. F. E., a Gentleman of the Inner Temple."

TO THOMAS FLOWER ELLIS

Dear Ellis, — I have at this moment the disposal of a tolerable piece of patronage, the chaplainship of Chelsea Hospital: light duty, a nice house, coal, candles, and three hundred pounds a year. It would be an exceedingly pleasant situation for a literary man. But he must also be a man of piety and feeling; for, the hospital being full of old battered soldiers, the duty, though by no means onerous, consists chiefly in attending sick-beds, and I would not for any consideration assign such a duty to a person who would hurry through it in a perfunctory manner. Is there any among the junior fellows of Trinity who would suit? I do not want a politician; and nothing shall induce me to take a Puseyite.

Yours very truly, T. B. M.

TO HANNAH MACAULAY TREVELYAN

Edinburgh, July 30th, 1847.

Dearest Hannah, — I hope that you will not be much vexed; for I am not vexed, but as cheerful as ever I was in my life. I have been completely beaten. The poll has not closed; but there is no chance that I shall retrieve the lost ground. Radicals, Tories, Dissenters, Voluntaries, Free Churchmen, spirit-drinkers who are angry because I will not pledge myself to repeal all taxes on whiskey, and great numbers of persons who are jealous of my chief supporters here, and think that the patronage of Edinburgh has been too exclusively distributed among a clique, have united to bear me down. I will make no hasty resolutions; but everything seems to indicate that I ought to take this opportunity of retiring from public life.

Ever yours, T. B. M.

TO MARGARET TREVELYAN

October 14th, 1851.

Dear Margaret, — Tell me how you like Schiller's Mary Stuart. It is not one of my favorite pieces. I should put it fourth among his plays. I arrange them thus: Wallenstein, William Tell, Don Carlos, Mary Stuart, the Maid of Orleans. At a great interval comes the Bride of Messina; and then, at another great interval, Fieschi. Cabal and Love I never could get through. The Robbers is a mere schoolboy rant, below serious criticism, but not without indications of mental vigor which required to be disciplined by much thought and study. But though I do not put Mary Stuart very high among Schiller's works, I think the Fotheringay scenes in the fifth act equal to anything that he ever wrote — indeed, equal to anything dramatic that has been produced in Europe since Shakespeare. I hope that you will feel the wonderful truth and beauty of that part of the play.

I cannot agree with you in admiring Sintram. There is an age at which we are disposed to think that whatever is odd and extravagant is great. At that age we are liable to be taken in by such orators as Irving, such painters as Fuseli, such plays as The Robbers, such romances as Sintram. A better time comes, when we would give all Fuseli's hobgoblins for one of Reynolds's little children, and all Sintram's dialogues with Death and the Devil for one speech of Mrs. Norris or Miss Bates. Tell me, however, as of course you will, quite truly what you think of Sintram.

I saw a description of myself yesterday in a New York paper. The writer says that I am a stout man, with hazel eyes; that I always walk with an umbrella; that I sometimes bang the umbrella against the ground; that I often dine in the coffee-room of the Trafalgar on fish; that once he saw me break a decanter there, but that I did not appear to be at all ashamed of my awkwardness, but called for my bill as coolly as if nothing had happened. I have no recollection of such an occurrence; but, if it did take place, I do not think that it would have deprived me of my self-possession. This is fame. This is the advantage of making a figure in the world.

This has been the last week of the Great Exhibition. It makes me quite sad to think of our many, many happy walks there. To-morrow I shall go to the final ceremony, and try to hear the Bishop of London's thanksgiving, in which I shall very cordially join. This will long be remembered as a singularly happy year, of peace, plenty, good feeling, innocent pleasure, national glory of the best and purest sort.

I have bespoken a Schiller for you. It is in the binder's hands, and will be ready, I hope, before your return. Ever yours, T. B. Macaulay.

TO MISS MACAULAY

Albany, June 19th, 1852.

Dear Fanny, — I have not made, and do not mean to make, the smallest move toward the people of Edinburgh. But they, to my great surprise, have found out that they treated me ill five years ago, and that they are now paying the penalty. They can get nobody to stand who is likely to do them credit; and it seemed as if they were in danger of having members who would have made them regret not only me, but Cowan. Then, without any communication with me, it was suggested by some of the most respectable citizens that the town might solve its difficulties by electing me without asking me to go down, or to give any pledges, or even any opinion, on political matters. The hint was eagerly taken up; and I am assured that the feeling in my favor is strong, and that I shall probably be at the head of the poll. All that I have been asked to do is to say that, if I am chosen on those terms, I will sit. On full consideration, I did not think that I could, consistently with my duty, decline the invitation.

To me, personally, the sacrifice is great. Though I shall not make a drudge of myself, and though I certainly shall never, in any event, accept office, the appearance of my next volumes may be postponed a year, or even two. But it seems to me to be of the highest importance that great constituent bodies should learn to respect the conscience and the honor of their representatives; should not expect slavish obedience from men of spirit and ability; and should, instead of catechising such men, and cavilling at them, repose in them a large confidence. The way in which such bodies have of late behaved has driven many excellent persons from public life, and will, unless a remedy is found, drive away many more. The conduct of Edinburgh toward me was not worse than that of several other places to their members; but it attracted more notice, and has been often mentioned, in Parliament and out of Parliament, as a flagrant instance of the caprice and perverseness of even the most intelligent bodies of electors. It is, therefore, not an unimportant nor an undesirable thing that Edinburgh should, quite spontaneously, make a very signal, I may say, an unprecedented, reparation.

Do not talk about this more than you find absolutely necessary; but treat it lightly, as I do in all companies where I hear it mentioned.

Ever yours, T. B. MACAULAY.

TO THOMAS FLOWER ELLIS

ALBANY, December 8th, 1852.

DEAR EMPSON, — I meant dear Ellis; but my mind is full of poor Empson. He is dying. I expect every hour to hear that all is over. Poor fellow! He was a most kind, generous friend to me, and as unselfish and unenvious as yourself. Longman has just been here; sorry for Empson, and anxious about the Review.[1] I recommended Cornewall Lewis; and I have little doubt that the offer will be made to him.

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[1] Mr. Empson had succeeded Mr. Napier as editor of the Edinburgh Review.

December 13th, 1852.

Poor Empson died with admirable fortitude and cheerfulness. I find that his wife was lately brought to bed. He spoke to her, to his friends, and to his other children with kindness, but with perfect firmness; but when the baby was put on his bed he burst into tears. Poor fellow! For my part, I feel that I should die best in the situation of Charles the First, or Louis the Sixteenth, or Montrose — I mean quite alone, surrounded by enemies, and nobody that I cared for near me. The parting is the dreadful thing. I do not wonder at Russell's saying, "The bitterness of death is past." [1]

December 30th, 1852.

I am glad that you like Beaumarchais. The result was that the Goëzmans were utterly ruined: the husband forced to quit his office, the wife driven to a convent. Beaumarchais was blâmé by the Court. The effect of that blâme was very serious. It made a man legally infamous, I believe, and deprived him of many civil rights. But the public feeling was so strongly with Beaumarchais that he paraded his stigma as if it had been a mark of honor. He gave himself such airs that somebody said to him, "Monsieur, ce n'est pas assez que d'être blâmé: il faut être modeste." Do you see the whole finesse of this untranslatable *mot?* What a quantity of French words I have used! I suppose that the subject Frenchifies my style.[2]

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[1] The famous scene between Lord Russell and his wife is described, briefly enough, by Hume: "With a tender and decent composure they took leave of each other on the day of his execution. 'The bitterness of death is now past,' said he, when he turned from her."

[2] Mr. Goëzman was the judge who threw Beaumarchais over, after Madame Goëzman had accepted a present from him. The unsuccessful suitor got his present back, "and those who had disappointed him probably thought that he would not, for the mere gratification of his malevolence, make public a transaction which was discreditable to himself as well as to them. They knew little of him. He soon taught them to curse the

I am disengaged all next week. Fix some day for dining with me in honor of 1853. I hope that it will be as happy a year as, in spite of some bodily suffering, 1852 has been to me. It is odd that, though time is stealing from me perceptibly my vigor and my pleasures, I am growing happier and happier. As Milnes says, it is shocking, it is scandalous, to enjoy life as I do.

ALBANY, July 11th, 1853.

Read Haydon's memoirs. Haydon was exactly the vulgar idea of a man of genius. He had all the morbid peculiarities which are supposed by fools to belong to intellectual superiority — eccentricity, jealousy, caprice, infinite disdain for other men; and yet he was as poor, commonplace a creature as any in the world. He painted signs, and gave himself more airs than if he had painted the Cartoons. . . . Whether you struck him or stroked him, starved him or fed him, he snapped at your hand in just the same way. He would beg you in piteous accents to buy an acre and a half of canvas that he had spoiled. Some good-natured lord asks the price. Haydon demands a hundred guineas. His lordship gives the money out of mere charity, and is rewarded by some such entry as this in Haydon's journal: "A hundred guineas, and for such a work! I expected that, for very shame, he would have made it a thousand. But he is a mean, sordid wretch." In the meantime the purchaser is looking out for the most retired spot in his house to hide the huge daub which he has bought, for ten times its value, out of mere compassion.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS, July 28th, 1853.

I hope that you are looking forward to our tour. On Tuesday, the twenty-third, I shall be at the Albany, and

day in which they had dared to trifle with a man of so revengeful and turbulent a spirit, of such dauntless effrontery, and of such eminent talents for controversy and satire." Macaulay's account of the Goëzman scandal, in his essay on Bacon, makes it evident that to write about Beaumarchais did not necessarily Frenchify his style.

shall proceed to hire a courier, and to get passports. My present notion of a route is Dover; Ostend; Cologne; the Rhine to Strasburg; the railway to Basle; voiture or diligence to Berne, and from Berne to Lausanne; steamboat on the Lake of Geneva; post to Lyons; up the Saône by steam to Chalons; railway to Paris; three or four days at Paris; and back to London in one day. But I shall readily agree to any modification which you may propose. We could easily, I think, do all this, and be in town on the eighteenth of September with a great stock of pleasant recollections, and images of fine objects, natural and artificial. I dare say you will despise me for saying that, on the whole, I expect more pleasure from the cathedrals of Cologne and Strasburg than from the Bernese Alps or the Lake of Geneva.[1]

TUNBRIDGE WELLS, August 16th, 1853.

I am glad to find that we shall have a clear three weeks for our expedition. I hope to secure Wolmar. At all events, I shall have a good courier. I can afford to indulge myself; for Longman informs me that he shall have more than thirteen hundred pounds to pay me on the first of December, besides five hundred pounds in the first week of January; so that my whole income this year will be about three thousand six hundred pounds, clear of property tax. Like Dogberry, I shall have two gowns, and everything handsome about me. But, alas! like Dogberry, I have had losses. The East India Company is going to pay me off some thousands; and I must take four per cent instead of five, and be thankful even to get four. How justly has an ancient poet observed that

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[1] Like many other people, Macaulay was disappointed with the cathedral of Cologne. "My expectations," he says in his journal, "had been raised too high, and perhaps nothing could quite have satisfied me. It will never be equal to St. Ouen, and, I think, hardly to York Minster." Of the tower at Strasburg he writes: "I thought it the most exquisite morsel of Gothic architecture that I ever saw. The interior is grand, but has faults. The side aisles are too broad for their height. Even the central aisle would be better if it were narrower. The end of the vista is wretched. Nevertheless, it is a church of the first rank." He thoroughly enjoyed his tour. "So ends this journal of my travels. Very pleasant travels they were. I had good health, generally good weather, a good friend, and a good servant."

> "Crescentem sequitur cura pecuniam!"

However, as my Lord Smart says, "Hang saving! We 'll have a penn'orth of cheese."[1] I say, "Hang saving! We 'll have a jolly three weeks on the Continent."

I send you a treasure. I do believe that it is the autograph of the great Robert Montgomery. Pray let me have it again. I would not lose such a jewel on any account. I have read it, as Mr. Montgomery desires, in the presence of God; and in the presence of God I pronounce it to be incomparable.[2]

Glorious news! Robert Montgomery writes to Longman that there is a point at which human patience must give way. Since the resignation and Christian fortitude of a quarter of a century have made no impression on the hard heart and darkened conscience of Mr. Macaulay, an injured poet must appeal to the laws of his country, which will doubtless give him a redress the more signal because he has been so slow to ask for it. I retain you. Consider yourself as feed. You shall choose your own junior. I shall put nobody over your head in this cause. Will he apply for a criminal information? Imagine Jack![3] "I have *thee graitest* respect for the very eminent poet who makes this application, and for the very eminent critic against whom it is made. It must be very satisfactory to Mr.

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[1] Lord Smart is one of the characters in Swift's Polite Conversations; a book strangely neglected by a generation which ransacks the world from California to Calcutta for something to laugh at.

[2] "Robert Montgomery," Macaulay says in his journal, "has written to ask that he may be taken out of the pillory. Never, with my consent. He is the silliest scribbler of my time; and that his book sells among a certain class is a reason for keeping my protest on record. Besides, he has calumniated me in print, and I will not seem to be bullied into a concession."

[3] It is to be feared that this unceremonious reference is to no less a personage than Lord Campbell.

Montgomery to have had an opportunity of denying on oath the charge that he writes nonsense. But it is not the practice of this court to grant criminal informations against libels which have been a quarter of a century before the world." I send you some exquisite lines which I saw placarded on a wall the other day. The versification and diction seem to me perfect. Byron's My time, O ye Muses, is not so complete in its kind.[1]

> "Although it is wrong, I must frankly confess,
> To judge of the merits of folks by their dress,
> I cannot but think that an ill-looking hat
> Is a very bad sign of a man, for all that;
> Especially now, when James Johnson is willing
> To touch up our old ones in style for a shilling,
> And gives them a gloss of so silky a hue
> As makes them look newer than when they were new."

TO GEORGE OTTO TREVELYAN

TUNBRIDGE WELLS, August 1st, 1853.

DEAR GEORGE, — I am glad that you are working hard. Did you ever read Paradise Lost? If not, I would advise you to read it now; for it is the best commentary that I know on the Prometheus. There was a great resemblance between the genius of Æschylus and the genius of Milton; and this appears most strikingly in those two wonderful creations of the imagination, Prometheus and Satan. I do not believe that Milton borrowed Satan from the Greek drama. For, though he was an excellent scholar after the fashion of his time, Æschylus was, I suspect, a little beyond him. You cannot conceive how much the facilities for reading the Greek writers have increased within the last two hundred years, how much better the text is now printed, and how much light the successive labors of learned men have thrown on obscure passages. I was greatly struck with this when, at Althorp, I looked through Lord Spencer's magnificent collection of Aldine editions. Numerous passages which are now perfectly simple were mere heaps of nonsense. And no writer suffered more than Æschylus.

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[1] Byrom's lines,

> "My time, O ye Muses, was happily spent
> When Phœbe went with me wherever I went,"

were addressed to Joanna Bentley, the daughter of the great critic, and constitute the 603d paper of the Spectator. The effect which this little poem produces upon the reader may best be described by one of its prettiest couplets; for it resembles

> "The fountain that wont to run sweetly along,
> And dance to soft murmurs the pebbles among."

Note particularly in the Prometheus the magnificent history of the origin of arts and sciences. That passage shows Æschylus to have been not only a poet of the first order, but a great thinker. It is the fashion to call Euripides a philosophical poet; but I remember nothing in Euripides so philosophical as that rapid enumeration of all the discoveries and inventions which make the difference between savage and civilized man. The latter part of the play is glorious.

I am very busy here getting some of my speeches ready for the press, and during the day I get no reading, except while I walk on the heath, and then I read Plato, one of the five first-rate Athenians. The other four are your friends Æschylus and Thucydides, Sophocles and Demosthenes. I know of no sixth Athenian who can be added to the list. Certainly not Euripides, nor Xenophon, nor Isocrates, nor Æschines. But I forgot Aristophanes. More shame for me. He makes six, and I can certainly add nobody else to the six. How I go on gossiping about these old fellows when I should be thinking of other things! Ever yours,

T. B. Macaulay.

[Macaulay died 28 December, 1859, and was buried with honors in Westminster Abbey, 9 January, 1861. His tomb is in the Poets' Corner, and the stone bears the inscription:—

THOMAS BABINGTON, LORD MACAULAY

BORN AT ROTHLEY TEMPLE, LEICESTERSHIRE,

OCTOBER 25TH, 1800

DIED AT HOLLY LODGE, CAMPDEN HILL,

DECEMBER 28TH, 1859

"HIS BODY IS BURIED IN PEACE,

BUT HIS NAME LIVETH FOR EVERMORE."]

APPENDIX

In one of his early essays Mr. Macaulay made a comparison of prize poems to prize sheep, and pronounced both worthless. In view of this well-remembered censure, Lord Macaulay could hardly make an exception in his own favor, and it is to this that we attribute the omission in his collected works of the poems we reprint in this appendix. In 1820 he was an unsuccessful competitor for the prize proposed by the University on the subject of Waterloo. Hannah More, in one of her letters, makes this allusion to it: "I feel for poor Tom's disappointment; but, in a moral point of view, it may have its uses. It may stimulate diligence, and promote humility."[1] Some other references to the poetical and intellectual pursuits of his boyhood and youth occur in the correspondence of that lady with his father, Zachary Macaulay, which are of sufficient interest to be preserved in connection with these early productions. We copy them from a volume of her Letters, edited by the Rev. Mr. Roberts, and published in London in 1860.

EXTRACTS FROM H. MORE'S LETTERS

BARLEY WOOD, *November* 10, 1812.

TO ZACHARY MACAULAY.

Pattey intended to-day to have answered Mrs. M.'s kind letter received only last night; but, as I fear her bad eyes and other impediments may prevent her, I snatch up my pen to say how delighted I was with Tom's verses. They are all good: but the stanza beginning with "In pride he rose," etc., is absolutely fine. I showed them to Charles Hoare and the younger Cunningham, who were much pleased with them. They did not seem to have seen before any specimens of his genius.

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[1] An allusion to this occurs in a letter from his father to a friend of H. More's, written in August, 1822: "P. S. — When our friend is well enough to enjoy it, I will send her a copy of Tom's poem of *Waterloo* which lost the prize the year before last. When I say enjoy it, I mean that, interested as I know her to be in all he does, she will not be indisposed to read with indulgence even his unsuccessful efforts to celebrate that memorable field."

August, 1813.

. . . Tom's "Moscow" is as good, and perhaps more faultless than any of his preceding verses. I did not invite him this year out of pure consideration, it being so long a journey quite another way; and I conceived his fond parents would be glad to have him to themselves after this first separation.

Barley Wood, *January* 15, 1814.

I write to chide you for not having sent me Tom's epitaph on Mr. Martyn, which Mr. Preston repeated to me yesterday, and which is excellent. I had a very satisfactory conversation with Mr. P. on his subject. He says he learns *rapidly* and *generally*, that his dispositions are good, and his reverence for religion what he could wish. I trust, by the blessing of God, he will make a solid, as well as a shining character. The prospect is most happy.

Barley Wood, *July* 21 [1815].

I wanted Tom to write to-day, but as he is likely to be much engaged with a favorite friend, and I shall have no time to-morrow, I scribble a line. This friend is a sensible youth at Woolwich; he is qualifying for the artillery. I overheard a debate between them on the comparative merits of Eugene and Marlborough as generals. The quantity of reading that Tom has poured in, and the quantity of writing he has poured out, is astonishing. It is in vain I have tried to make him subscribe to Sir Henry Savile's notion, that the poets are the best writers next to those who write prose.[1] We have poetry for breakfast, dinner, and supper. He recited *all* "Palestine," while we breakfasted, to our pious friend Mr. Whalley, at my desire, and did it incomparably. I was pleased with his delicacy in one thing. You know the Italian poets, like the French, too much indulge in the profane habit of attesting the Supreme Being; but, without any hint from me, whenever he comes to the Sacred Name, he reverently passes it over. I sometimes fancy I observe a daily progress in the growth of his mental powers. His fine promise of mind expands more and more, and, what is extraordinary, he has as much accuracy in his expression as spirit and vivacity in his imagination. I like, too, that he takes a lively interest in all passing events, and that the *child* is still preserved; I like to see him as boyish as he is studious, and that he is as much amused with making a pat of butter as a poem. Though loquacious, he is very docile, and I don't remember a single instance in which he has persisted in doing anything when he saw we did not approve it. Several men of sense and learning have been struck with the union of gayety and rationality in his conversation. It was a pretty trait of him yesterday: being invited to dine abroad, he hesitated, then said, "No; I have so few days that I will give them all to you." And he said to-day at dinner, when speaking of his journey, "I know not whether to think on my departure with most pain or pleasure — with most kindness for my friends, or affection for my parents."

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[1] She seems to have been somewhat apprehensive that, as poetry was so much his addiction, it would become, in a manner, his profession, for she observes, in a postscript to one of her letters, "I am afraid Tom will be really a poet." — *Roberts.*

Sometimes we converse in ballad-rhymes, sometimes in Johnsonian sesquipedalians; at tea, we condescend to riddles and charades. He rises early, and walks an hour or two before breakfast, generally composing verses. I encourage him to live much in the open air; this, with great exercise on these airy summits, I hope, will invigorate his body; though this frail body is sometimes tired, the spirits are never exhausted. He is, however, not sorry to be sent to bed soon after nine, and seldom stays to our supper.

A new poem is produced less incorrect than its predecessors. It is an excellent satire on radical reform, under the title of "Clodpole and the Quack-doctor." It is really good. I am glad to see that they are thrown by as soon as they have been once read, and he thinks no more of them. He has very quick perceptions of the beautiful and defective in composition. I received your note last night, and Tom his humbling one. I tell him he is incorrigible in the way of tidiness. The other day, talking of what were the symptoms of a gentleman, he said, with some humor, and much *good*-humor, that he had certain infallible marks of one; which were, neatness, love of cleanliness, and delicacy in his person. I know not when I have written so long a scrawl; but I thought you and his good mother would feel an interest in any trifles which related to him. I hope it will please God to prosper his journey, and restore him in safety to you. Let us hear of his arrival.

July 22, 1819.

TO MR. AND MRS. HUBER.

MY DEAR KIND FRIENDS, — I take shame to myself for delaying to answer two very kind letters, *male* and *female;* but could you see how absorbed my time has been with conflicting engagements, I know you would forgive me. The chief subject, too, being business, and a kind of business of my own, makes me appear more inexcusable. I shall write by this same post to Mr. Hillhouse. Before I wrote to him I waited for the advice of my wise friend Macaulay, who is here with his wonderful son. . . .

Tom Macaulay has obtained the Chancellor's (Duke of Gloucester's) prize of a rich gold medal, for a beautiful poem, the subject "Pompeii," which he first wrote, and last week recited before the Chancellor and twelve hundred persons in college, and has gained a high reputation by it. The verses are really worth any poet of any age.

August 24, 1819.

TO ZACHARY MACAULAY, ESQ.

. . . I am in debt to dear Tom for much entertainment. "My Royal Edict" really beats Mr. Simeon's. We have been delighted with it. I am afraid he must be a lawyer. What a pity! but really his talents seem irresistibly to lead that way. This is not the only entertainment; he has enabled me to give others. We have had quite an episcopal week — the Bishop of Gloucester the first part of it; the Bishop of St. David's the latter part. The former read Tom's "Pompeii" to a party; all were charmed with it, but none more than the reader, to whom I presented my *worst* copy. The Bishop of St. David's sight being too much impaired, I read the poem to him. He was much pleased, and could hardly credit the age of the writer. Professor Farish, who has also been here, gave us a pleasing account of the *Commencement*, and Tom's share in it, as Lady O. Sparrow has since done. I really wish to write to Tom, but have been so oppressed by company, and other interruptions, that I have not been able. I would not tell *him* all these flattering things; but I could not keep them from his mother.

POMPEII

A Poem which obtained the Chancellor's Medal at the Cambridge Commencement, July, 1819

BY THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY, OF TRINITY COLLEGE

OH! land, to Mem'ry and to Freedom dear,
Land of the melting lyre and conqu'ring spear,
Land of the vine-clad hill, the fragrant grove,
Of arts and arms, of Genius and of Love,
Hear, fairest Italy. Tho' now no more
Thy glitt'ring eagles awe th' Atlantic shore,
Nor at thy feet the gorgeous Orient flings
The blood-bought treasures of her tawny Kings,
Tho' vanish'd all that form'd thine old renown,
The laurel garland, and the jewell'd crown,
Th' avenging poniard, the victorious sword,
Which rear'd thine empire, or thy rights restor'd,
Yet still the constant Muses haunt thy shore,
And love to linger where they dwelt of yore.
If e'er of old they deign'd, with fav'ring smile,
To tread the sea-girt shores of Albion's isle,
To smooth with classic arts our rugged tongue,
And warm with classic glow the British song,
Oh! bid them snatch their silent harps which wave
On the lone oak that shades thy Maro's grave,[1]
And sweep with magic hand the slumb'ring strings,
To fire the poet. — For thy clime he sings,
Thy scenes of gay delight and wild despair,
Thy vary'd forms of awful and of fair.

[1] See Eustace's description of the *Tomb of Virgil*, on the Neapolitan coast.

How rich that climate's sweets, how wild its storms,
What charms array it, and what rage deforms,
Well have thy mould'ring walls, Pompeii, known,
Deck'd in those charms, and by that rage o'erthrown.
Sad City, gaily dawn'd thy latest day,
And pour'd its radiance on a scene as gay.
The leaves scarce rustled in the sighing breeze;
In azure dimples curl'd the sparkling seas,
And, as the golden tide of light they quaff'd,
Campania's sunny meads and vineyards laugh'd,
While gleam'd each lichen'd oak and giant pine,
On the far sides of swarthy Apennine.
Then mirth and music thro' Pompeii rung;
Then verdant wreaths on all her portals hung;
Her sons with solemn rite and jocund lay
Hail'd the glad splendors of that festal day.
With fillets bound the hoary priests advance,
And rosy virgins braid the choral dance.
The rugged warrior here unbends awhile
His iron front, and deigns a transient smile:
There, frantic with delight, the ruddy boy
Scarce treads on earth, and bounds and laughs with joy.
From ev'ry crowded altar perfumes rise
In billowy clouds of fragrance to the skies.
The milk-white monarch of the herd they lead,
With gilded horns, at yonder shrine to bleed;
And while the victim crops the broider'd plain,
And frisks and gambols tow'rds the destin'd fane,
They little deem that like himself they stray
To death, unconscious, o'er a flow'ry way,
Heedless, like him, th' impending stroke await,
And sport and wanton on the brink of fate.
What vails it that where yonder heights aspire,
With ashes pil'd, and scath'd with rills of fire,
Gigantic phantoms dimly seem'd to glide,[1]
In misty files, along the mountain's side,

---

[1] Dio Cassius relates that figures of gigantic size appeared, for some time previous to the destruction of Pompeii, on the summits of Vesuvius. This appearance was probably occasioned by the fantastic forms which the smoke from the crater of the volcano assumed.

To view with threat'ning scowl your fated lands,
And tow'rd your city point their shadowy hands?
In vain celestial omens prompted fear,
And nature's signals spoke the ruin near.
In vain thro' many a night ye view'd from far
The meteor flag of elemental war
Unroll its blazing folds from yonder height,
In fearful sign of earth's intestine fight.
In vain Vesuvius groan'd with wrath suppress,
And mutter'd thunder in his burning breast.
Long since the Eagle from that flaming peak
Hath soar'd with screams a safer nest to seek.
Aw'd by th' infernal beacon's fitful glare,
The howling fox hath left his wonted lair;
Nor dares the browsing goat in vent'rous leap
To spring, as erst, from dizzy steep to steep.—
Man only mocks the peril. Man alone
Defies the sulph'rous flame, the warning groan.
While instinct, humbler guardian, wakes and saves,
Proud reason sleeps, nor knows the doom it braves.
But see, the op'ning theatre invites
The fated myriads to its gay delights.
In, in, they swarm, tumultuous as the roar
Of foaming breakers on a rocky shore.
Th' enraptur'd throng in breathless transport views
The gorgeous temple of the Tragic Muse.
There, while her wand in shadowy pomp arrays
Ideal scenes, and forms of other days,
Fair as the hopes of youth, a radiant band,
The sister arts around her footstool stand,
To deck their Queen, and lend a milder grace
To the stern beauty of that awful face.
Far, far, around the ravish'd eye surveys
The sculptur'd forms of Gods and Heroes blaze.
Above, the echoing roofs the peal prolong
Of lofty converse, or melodious song,
While, as the tones of passion sink or swell,
Admiring thousands own the moral spell,
Melt with the melting strains of fancy'd woe,
With terror sicken, or with transport glow.

Oh! for a voice like that which peal'd of old
Thro' Salem's cedar courts and shrines of gold,
And in wild accents round the trembling dome
Proclaim'd the havoc of avenging Rome,
While ev'ry palmy arch and sculptur'd tow'r
Shook with the footsteps of the parting pow'r.
Such voice might check your tears, which idly stream
For the vain phantoms of the poet's dream,
Might bid those terrors rise, those sorrows flow,
For other perils, and for nearer woe.
The hour is come. Ev'n now the sulph'rous cloud
Involves the city in its fun'ral shroud,
And far along Campania's azure sky
Expands its dark and boundless canopy.
The Sun, tho' thron'd on heav'n's meridian height,
Burns red and rayless thro' that sickly night.
Each bosom felt at once the shudd'ring thrill.
At once the music stopp'd. The song was still.
None in that cloud's portentous shade might trace
The fearful changes of another's face:
But thro' that horrid stillness each could hear
His neighbor's throbbing heart beat high with fear.
A moment's pause succeeds. Then wildly rise
Grief's sobbing plaints and terror's frantic cries.
The gates recoil; and tow'rds the narrow pass
In wild confusion rolls the living mass.
Death, when thy shadowy sceptre waves away
From his sad couch the pris'ner of decay,
Tho' friendship view the close with glist'ning eye,
And love's fond lips imbibe the parting sigh,
By torture rack'd, by kindness sooth'd in vain,
The soul still clings to being and to pain.
But when have wilder terrors cloth'd thy brow,
Or keener torments edg'd thy dart than now,
When with thy regal horrors vainly strove
The laws of nature, and the power of Love?
On mothers babes in vain for mercy call,
Beneath the feet of brothers, brothers fall.
Behold the dying wretch in vain upraise
Tow'rds yonder well-known face the accusing gaze;

See trampl'd to the earth th' expiring maid
Clings round her lover's feet, and shrieks for aid.
Vain is th' imploring glance, the frenzy'd cry;
All, all is fear; — To succor is to die.
Saw ye how wild, how red, how broad a light
Burst on the darkness of that mid-day night,
As fierce Vesuvius scatter'd o'er the vale
His drifted flames and sheets of burning hail,
Shook hell's wan lightnings from his blazing cone,
And gilded heav'n with meteors not its own?
  The morn all blushing rose; but sought in vain
The snowy villas and the flow'ry plain,
The purple hills with marshall'd vineyards gay,
The domes that sparkled in the sunny ray.
Where art or nature late had deck'd the scene
With blazing marble or with spangled green,
There, streak'd by many a fiery torrent's bed,
A boundless waste of hoary ashes spread.
  Along that dreary waste where lately rung
The festal lay which smiling virgins sung,
Where rapture echoed from the warbling lute,
And the gay dance resounded, all is mute. —
Mute! — Is it Fancy shapes that wailing sound
Which faintly murmurs from the blasted ground,
Or live there still, who, breathing in the tomb,
Curse the dark refuge which delays their doom,
In massive vaults, on which th' incumbent plain
And ruin'd city heap their weight in vain?
  Oh! who may sing that hour of mortal strife,
When Nature calls on Death, yet clings to life?
Who paint the wretch that draws sepulchral breath,
A living pris'ner in the house of Death?
Pale as the corpse which loads the fun'ral pile,
With face convuls'd that writhes a ghastly smile,
Behold him speechless move with hurry'd pace,
Incessant, round his dungeon's caverned space,
Now shriek in terror, and now groan in pain,
Gnaw his white lips, and strike his burning brain,
Till Fear o'erstrain'd in stupor dies away,
And Madness wrests her victim from dismay.

His arms sink down; his wild and stony eye
Glares without sight on blackest vacancy.
He feels not, sees not; wrapp'd in senseless trance
His soul is still and listless as his glance.
One cheerless blank, one rayless mist is there,
Thoughts, senses, passions, live not with despair.
  Haste, Famine, haste, to urge the destin'd close,
And lull the horrid scene to stern repose.
Yet ere, dire Fiend, thy ling'ring tortures cease,
And all be hush'd in still sepulchral peace,
Those caves shall wilder, darker deeds behold
Than e'er the voice of song or fable told,
Whate'er dismay may prompt, or madness dare,
Feasts of the grave, and banquets of despair. —
Hide, hide, the scene; and o'er the blasting sight
Fling the dark veil of ages and of night.
  Go, seek Pompeii now: — with pensive tread
Roam thro' the silent city of the dead.
Explore each spot, where still, in ruin grand,
Her shapeless piles and tott'ring columns stand,
Where the pale ivy's clasping wreaths o'ershade
The ruin'd temple's moss-clad colonnade,
Or violets on the hearth's cold marble wave,
And muse in silence on a people's grave.
Fear not. — No sign of death thine eyes shall scare,
No, all is beauty, verdure, fragrance there.
A gentle slope includes the fatal ground
With od'rous shrubs and tufted myrtles crown'd,
Beneath, o'ergrown with grass, or wreath'd with flow'rs,
Lie tombs and temples, columns, baths, and towers.
As if in mock'ry, Nature seems to dress
In all her charms the beauteous wilderness,
And bids her gayest flow'rets twine and bloom
In sweet profusion o'er a city's tomb.
With roses here she decks th' untrodden path,
With lilies fringes there the stately bath,
Th' Acanthus' spreading foliage here she weaves [1]

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[1] The capital of the Corinthian pillar is carved, as is well known, in imitation of the Acanthus. Mons. de Chateaubriand, as I have found since this poem was written, has employed the same image in his Travels.

Round the gay capital which mocks its leaves,
There hangs the sides of ev'ry mould'ring room
With tap'stry from her own fantastic loom,
Wall-flow'rs and weeds, whose glowing hues supply
With simple grace the purple's Tyrian dye.
The ruin'd city sleeps in fragrant shade,
Like the pale corpse of some Athenian maid,[1]
Whose marble arms, cold brows, and snowy neck
The fairest flow'rs of fairest climates deck,
Meet types of her whose form their wreaths array,
Of radiant beauty, and of swift decay.
   Advance, and wander on thro' crumbling halls,
Thro' prostrate gates, and ivy'd pedestals,
Arches, whose echoes now no chariots rouse,
Tombs, on whose summits goats undaunted browse.
See, where yon ruin'd wall on earth reclines,
Thro' weeds and moss the half-seen painting shines,
Still vivid 'midst the dewy cowslips glows,
Or blends its colors with the blushing rose.
   Thou lovely, ghastly scene of fair decay,
In beauty awful, and 'midst horrors gay,
Renown more wide, more bright shall gild thy name,
Than thy wild charms or fearful doom could claim.
   Immortal spirits, in whose deathless song
Latium and Athens yet their reign prolong,
And from their thrones of fame and empire hurl'd,
Still sway the sceptre of the mental world,
You, in whose breasts the flames of Pindus beam'd,
Whose copious lips with rich persuasion stream'd,
Whose minds unravell'd nature's mystic plan,
Or trac'd the mazy labyrinth of man;
Bend, glorious spirits, from your blissful bow'rs,
And broider'd couches of unfading flow'rs,
While round your locks th' Elysian garlands blow,
With sweeter odors, and with brighter glow.
Once more, immortal shades, atoning Fame
Repairs the honors of each glorious name.
Behold Pompeii's op'ning vaults restore

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[1] It is the custom of the modern Greeks to adorn corpses profusely with flowers.

The long-lost treasures of your ancient lore,
The vestal radiance of poetic fire,
The stately buskin, and the tuneful lyre,
The wand of eloquence, whose magic sway
The sceptres and the swords of earth obey,
And ev'ry mighty spell, whose strong control
Could nerve or melt, could fire or soothe the soul.
And thou, sad city, raise thy drooping head,
And share the honors of the glorious dead.
Had Fate repriev'd thee till the frozen North
Pour'd in wild swarms its hoarded millions forth,
Till blazing cities mark'd where Albion trod,
Or Europe quak'd beneath *the scourge of* GOD,[1]
No lasting wreath had grac'd thy fun'ral pall,
No fame redeem'd the horrors of thy fall.
Now shall thy deathless mem'ry live entwin'd
With all that conquers, rules, or charms the mind,
Each lofty thought of Poet or of Sage,
Each grace of Virgil's lyre, or Tully's page.
Like theirs whose Genius consecrates thy tomb,
Thy fame shall snatch from time a greener bloom,
Shall spread where'er the Muse has rear'd her throne,
And live renown'd in accents yet unknown;
Earth's utmost bounds shall join the glad acclaim,
And distant Camus bless Pompeii's name.

EVENING

A Poem which obtained the Chancellor's Medal at the Cambridge Commencement, July, 1821

BY THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY, SCHOLAR OF TRINITY COLLEGE

FAIR hour of Poesy's and Passion's dreams,
Of sweetest breezes, and of purest beams,
Rich clouds, and twinkling stars, and balmy dews,
Come, loveliest theme, and be thyself my Muse;
Breathe o'er the lay which fondly tells thy praise
The splendor of thine own voluptuous rays,

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[1] The well-known name of Attila.

The colors of thy bright and varying skies,
The music of thine airy melodies.—
For I have loved thee, EVENING.—I have felt
My soul beneath thy gentle influence melt,
Which lends to every scene and every tone
A mild and pensive softness all its own.
The shadows lengthen'd by the sloping light,
The gleam which lingers on the purple height,
The gale that whispers through the cool arcade
Form'd by the dark-green chestnut's massy shade,
The lake which burns one sheet of yellow fire,
The knell resounding from the distant spire,
The echoes which the circling hills prolong,
The raptures of the wild bird's piercing song,
Ev'n the rich music of the mellow horn
Which swells so jocund on the breeze of morn,
The blithest sounds, the gayest forms receive
A tinge of sadness from the spells of Eve.
The spirit of sweet melancholy floats
O'er all her scenes, and thrills in all her notes,
Breathes in the fragrant languor of her sigh,
Weeps in her dews, and blushes in her sky.
   How sweet it is, at that enchanting hour,
When earth is fresh with April's sunny shower,
To wander through some green and quiet lane,
O'erhung by briars and wild flowers moist with rain;
And view the Sun, descending to his rest,
Lead his bright triumph down the gorgeous West.
Amidst the glories of that radiant sky
Dun wreaths of cloud with crimson dappled lie,
Like the dark curls, with roses crown'd, which play
Around the brow of some fair queen of May;
And dusky streaks on which the sunbeams throw
A lurid mellowness, a sullen glow,
Whose inky masses seem to fancy's sight
Blue hilly isles amidst a sea of light,
Rugged with many a crag's fantastic shape,
And swelling ridge, and far-projecting cape.—
Dyed by the sinking rays the heavens assume
A brilliant tint of deep and rosy bloom,

The lovely hectic of declining day,
Height'ning its charms and marking its decay:
From hue to hue the varying splendors fade
And melt into a pale and saffron shade.
  At length the cottage windows cease to blaze,
And a soft vale of dim and silver haze
Floats o'er the watery meadows. All is still
Save the faint tinkling of the pebbled rill,
Or beetle's drowsy hum, or bat's shrill wail,
Or thrilling chant of love-lorn nightingale.
The stream hath darken'd to a purple hue;
The turf is fresh with cool and fragrant dew. —
Who loves not then with upward-gazing eye
To pore into the wide abyss of sky,
So still, so vast, so colorless, so pure,
Clear without light, and without gloom obscure;
And here and there to catch some lonely star
Twinkling in humid lustre from afar;
Or flashing in the West, fair Eve, to see
The planet dear to Venus and to thee.
  Oh! thou whose myrtle grove and od'rous shrine
An earlier age adored with rites divine,
When infant genius tuned the Grecian lyre
To hail thee Queen of beauty and desire;
Oh! nurse of softest hopes and fondest fears,
Of melancholy smiles and rapt'rous tears,
Thou phantom which some rich voluptuous mind
From all its wealth of glowing thoughts combined,
Thou sweet embodied wish, thou loveliest dream
That e'er in moonlight sleep, by lilied stream,
Bright with all mem'ry's and all fancy's dyes,
Floated before enamour'd Poet's eyes;
How justly ancient lore assign'd thy name
To yon fair emblem of thy mystic flame,
Love's consecrated lamp, which lights from high
The vespers of his fond idolatry!
How oft, fair star, have bards been wont to twine,
In flowery raptures, beauty's praise with thine,
And loveliest eyes gazed fondly on a ray
As bright, as dewy, and as soft as they!

But see the broad and yellow Moon emerge
Upon the dim horizon's eastern verge
In cold and ghastly beauty. Tree and height,
River and plain, are starting into light.—
How beautiful its gleams of silver fall
On the bright lattice and the flower-clad wall
Of snowy cottage, or the Gothic tower
Of some gray church which tufted yews embower!
How fair is yon meek wand'rer, as she strays
Through filmy shades which scarce conceal her blaze,
Or measures with her cold and pensive eye,
From some clear island of cerulean sky,
The billowy ocean of pale clouds around
O'er which her lone and nightly course is bound!
What marvel then if Man, while heaven denied
A hope to cheer him, and a law to guide,
Thou pure and radiant orb, adored in thee,
The source of radiance and of purity?
Oft, when along the sweet Campanian bay
The latest flush of sunset died away,
Th' Italian maid with reverence saw thee shine
Silvering the purple peaks of Apennine;
And kneeling on the fragrant turf where played,
In quivering fretwork, chequered light and shade,
Beneath some vine-clad elm's fantastic boughs
Pour'd forth to thee her blessings and her vows.—
No longer from thy hundred altars rise
The voice of prayer, the smoke of sacrifice.
Cithæron owns no more her Cynthia's reign,
And jackals howl above th' Ephesian fane.
Yet Contemplation still delights to gaze
On the wan lustre of thy frozen rays,
And pay, at that serene and solemn hour,
A juster homage to a holier Power.
Less gay is Evening when December's breeze
Sweeps through the roaring forest's leafless trees
In dreary cadence; when th' undazzled eye
Beholds, athwart the gray and frosty sky,
Stripp'd of his glittering robes and golden crown,
The blood-red Sun without a ray sink down.

Yet then 't is sweet to stray in pensive mood
Through the dim twilight of the naked wood,
Where groaning branches yield a mournful sound,
And wither'd leaves in eddies flit around.
'T is sweet to seek the flickering light and gloom
Of the neat fireside and the curtain'd room.
'T is sweet to listen to the driving rain,
The bellowing chimney, and the rattling pane;
And sweet it is, at every gust, to raise
The glowing embers to a brighter blaze,
And mark their quivering lustre glance the while
On eyes that sparkle, and on cheeks that smile;
On furrow'd brows which now forget to lower,
Charm'd by the sorcery of that tranquil hour,
And rosy infant lips which fondly press
To snatch the willing yet delayed caress.
  Alas! — no more with England's ancient rites
Blithe Christmas [1] leads along the wintry nights,
As when of old his purple visage bluff
And pointed cap, and rustling length of ruff
Came forth, with minstrel's song and jester's tale,
And boar's head garlanded, and amber ale,
And masquers [2] decked with bugle horn and bow,
And hissing crabs [3] and amorous mistletoe;
While the bright hearth, in joyous concert, roar'd
With blazing logs; and o'er the groaning board
Of glossy oak the prickly holly spread
Its varnish'd foliage and its berries red.
Yet joys, perchance as sweet, remain to cheer
The sullen evenings of the closing year;
The fireside circle at the close of day;
The licensed school-boy's Saturnalian sway;
The listed combat of the warrior train
In order marshalled on the chequer'd plain,
When these in sable, those in argent mail

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[1] This costume of Christmas is taken from the masque in which Ben Jonson has personified the festival.

[2] Robin Hood and his followers were principal characters in the old Masquerades of Christmas.

[3] "When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl." — *Shakespeare.*

The Chief, the hostile Chief alone assail.
To guard their King with brave devotion fly
His serried foot and bounding chivalry;
His mitred prelates burn with martial zeal;
His princess grasps her Amazonian steel.—
Hard is his heart who views with cynic eyes
Those bloodless fights, those tearless victories;
But his far harder, who can coldly turn
From the sweet rites of that enchanted urn
Whence some terrestrial Hebe deals around
The social cups with fragrant nectar crown'd.
  Thine, gentle Evening, is each power that binds
In mystic harmony, united minds,
And lulls to soft repose in verdant bowers,
Amidst a glowing paradise of flowers,
Of sparkling streams and spicy gales of bliss,
The way-worn pilgrims of a world like this.
Thine is the tenderness whose blameless joys
No guilt pollutes and no remorse alloys,
The rest which soothes the tortured spirit's strife,
The fairy Graces of domestic life.
Thine is the prayer lisp'd forth, with downcast eye
And lifted hands, by kneeling infancy,
And thoughts of solemn awe and grateful love
Which link mortality to realms above.
  Nor less, enchantress, to thy reign belong
The mines of science and the flowers of song,
And every glorious deed and thought sublime,
By virtue, or by Genius, snatch'd from time.
I love to trim the taper o'er the page
Where lives the mind of Poet or of Sage.
Then, as that beauteous and imperial Fay[1]
Renown'd in many a wild Ausonian lay
Crowds with fair shapes, and paints with glorious dyes
The sparkling azure of Sicilian skies,
And hangs her pillar'd domes and waving shades,
Her terraced streets and marble colonnades,
O'er the bright waters of that sapphire sea
Which laves thy sunny realms, Parthenope;

[1] The Fairy Morgana.

So o'er the soul the Muse's spells diffuse
The pomp of graceful forms and lovely hues;
Things uncreated, men unborn appear;
The past is present, and the distant near.
In long array on Fancy's wond'ring eyes
Visions of beauty or of terror rise;
The cauldron[1] mantling with the drugs of hell,
The suppliant charms of purest Isabel,[2]
Or that dire huntsman[3] whom with shudd'ring awe
The love-sick wand'rer of Ravenna saw.
Now, led by Milton's mighty hand, she roves
Through the dark verdure of primeval groves,
By streams that from their crystal bosoms fling
The gay profusion of unfading spring:
O'er beds of flow'rs, more fair, more frail than they
She views a form of peerless beauty stray,
Tend the gay fragrance of the nuptial shade,
And twine her locks with many a dewy braid.
The rose-crown'd priest[4] of love and wine she sees
Lead his quaint pageant through the moonlight trees.
She roams through proud Duessa's gilded hall;[5]
She melts in anguish o'er Clarissa's pall.
The fabled East pours forth its witching dreams,
Sweet as its gales, and gorgeous as its beams.
The Gothic Muse recounts in northern rhyme
The sterner legends of a sterner clime,
Her tales of trophied lists and rescued maids,
Of haunted fountains and enchanted blades.
  To graver themes shall wit and mirth succeed,
And urge the ling'ring hours to fleeter speed:
Again Parolles shall seek his luckless drum,
And Falstaff jest, and Epicene[6] be dumb,
The city's champion[7] wield his flaming mace,
And dear Sir Roger lead the joyous chase.
  Come ever thus, sweet Eve, and let thy smile

---

[1] See *Macbeth*.
[2] See *Measure for Measure*.
[3] See *Theodore and Honoria*.
[4] *Comus*.
[5] Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, Book I. Canto iv.
[6] See Ben Jonson's *Silent Woman*.
[7] See Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle*.

The sorrows and the toils of day beguile;
And as thy starlight dew and cooling breeze
Revive the swarthy turf and drooping trees,
Paint every sun-burnt flower with richer bloom,
And bathe the plains in moisture and perfume;
Thus let thy moral charms, with influence kind,
Repair the wither'd verdure of the mind;
And thus to fresher life, and brighter hue
Each languid hope, and faded joy renew.

Editorial Note.

I am informed by the valued friend of Hannah More who has supplied me with some other facts, that the poet recited this *propriâ personâ* at Barley Wood. "We were sitting," says this lady, "upon that occasion, in Mrs. H. More's room upstairs, and the poet lounged over a chest of drawers, in an ungraceful position, and read it aloud to the company;" but she observes that he did not do much justice to his composition by his method of delivery. — *Roberts.*

END OF THE MISCELLANIES

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